THE JOHNS HOPKINS STUDIES IN ROMANCE LITERATURES
AND LANGUAGES

VOLUME XX

THE TUDORS IN FRENCH DRAMA

BY
L. ALFREDA HILL

THE JOHNS HOPKINS PRESS
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

LONDON: HUMPHREY MILFORD
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

LES BELLES LETTRES, PARIS

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CHAPTER I

The Fame of the Tudors

Sixteenth-century England under the reign of the Tudors marks an epoch in European history; during that period, thanks to the strong and able rule of its sovereigns, England emerged from obscurity and medievalism to become a modern state, one of the first powers of Europe. The Tudors have set their ineradicable stamp upon their country, from the date of the accession of Henry VII, the first monarch, in 1485, until the death of Queen Elizabeth in 1603; their strong, personal rule, their wise administration of government, their patronage of the arts, and their devotion to nationalism gained for England a position of prime importance among other European states.[1] Today we speak of Tudor literature, of Tudor architecture, of Tudor government, as designating a distinct type evolved under their reign.

The dynasts themselves came from no very direct line of royal descent: their founder Owen Tudor, a faithful Lancastrian who belonged to a Welsh family of great antiquity, married Catherine of Valois, widow of Henry V, by whom he had three sons; the eldest, Edmund, created Earl of Richmond in 1453, married Lady Margaret Beaufort, heiress of John of Gaunt, by whom he had one son, Henry, who was later to become Henry VII of England. By the deaths of the Lancastrian monarch and his son, the young Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond, whose father, Edmund Tudor, had also died, became head of the Lancastrian party. After a stay in Brittany where his uncle, the Earl of Pembroke, deemed it wise to send him to escape the attacks of the Yorkists during the Wars of the Roses, Richmond returned auspiciously to England to fight the victorious Battle of Bosworth Field against Richard III and make himself king under the title of Henry VII (1485-1509). The

[1] See Arthur D. Innes, *England under the Tudors* (vol. IV of *A History of England* in 6 vols. General editor: C. W. C. Oman, London, Methuen, 1905), and Lewis Einstein, *Tudor Ideals*, New York, Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1921.

monarch's firm policy settled a country worn to exhaustion by civil strife. His son, Henry VIII (1509-1547), continued the work of national development and established the Anglican Church. Under his children, Edward VI (1547-1553), Mary (1553-1558), and especially Elizabeth (1558-1603), England assumed those aspects of progress and prosperity, of enlightenment and culture, which characterize modern civilization. Energy and vigor abounded; a new world of mysteries challenged the hardy seafarer; and life held a tang that made men revel in the present. It is not surprising, therefore, that the fame of the Tudors has survived to the present day, and that it early found expression in the literature of England itself and of other countries.

M. Georges Ascoli in a recent study [2] has shown us what the Frenchman of the sixteenth century knew of his English neighbor and in what esteem he held the Tudor monarchs. The results of his work, which have shed much light on the Anglo-French relations of that period, have served once more to show what a mighty power the Tudors swayed in sixteenth-century European policies. Henry VII upon his death was mourned in French as well as in English circles for the peace he had brought to both countries. His son Henry VIII in joining against Louis XII occasioned many poems of no flattering tone; but on his coming to the Meeting of the Cloth of Gold comment became more kindly: Marot in a ballad on the subject expressed the wish that peace and tranquility might issue from the contact, but his wishes were destined to remain unfulfilled, for Henry soon continued negotiations with Charles V. In 1535 the French expressed heart-felt sympathy for the execution of Sir Thomas More, and in the following year, at the beheading of Anne Boleyn, appeared a lengthy poem [3] on that event, written by Lancelot de Carles, secretary of Castelnau, Bishop of Tarbes.

If the reigns of Edward and Mary Tudor passed almost entirely uncommented on by their French contemporaries, their successor Elizabeth, with her illustrious cousin, the Queen of Scots, gave rise, on the other hand, to volumes of encomium and

[2] *La Grande-Bretagne devant l'opinion française depuis la guerre de Cent Ans jusqu'à la fin du XVIe siècle*, Paris, J. Gamber, 1927.

[3] *Poème sur la mort d'Anne Boleyn*, 1536. M. Ascoli has printed it in the appendix of his book, pp. 232-273.

vituperation from the pens of such men as Ronsard, du Bellay, Brantôme, Robert Garnier, Michel de l'Hospital, Jacques Grévin, Pasquier, du Bartas, d'Aubigné, and scores of other writers.[4]

Mary Queen of Scots, daughter of Marie de Guise, brought up at the French court and at an early age affianced to François, eldest son of Henri II, has ever been a subject for French authors. Her beauty evoked sonnets from Ronsard, anagrams from Jean de la Taille, and enthusiastic descriptions from Brantôme. After her return to Scotland when some authors accused her of Darnley's murder, others hastily rose in her defense; when Buchanan's diatribe against Mary was translated into French by the protestant Camus and circulated throughout the country, Brantôme challenged the statements, declared every one of them false and stoutly upheld Mary's innocence.[5]

Although a great outburst of sympathy was poured forth by the French upon the royal prisoner held in England, Elizabeth Tudor nevertheless received during her reign a goodly share of praise and admiration from French authors. Brantôme, after he had conducted Mary Stuart to Scotland in 1561, returned to France via London and described his enjoyment of Elizabeth's gracious hospitality. Ronsard lauded her personal attractions and her wisdom in government; Jacques Grévin, the dramatist, in 1567 found it necessary, because of his protestant faith, to take refuge in England, and at that time whiled away long dreary hours writing in Elizabeth's honor. Similar verses of praise came from other protestant writers, especially Agrippa d'Aubigné in his *Tragiques*.[6]

What reason had the French for their intense interest in the government of England? In the first place, Elizabeth was a monarch of interesting character, energetic and vigorous; in the second place, that monarch was a woman, and to the Frenchman of the sixteenth century, interested in questions of political theory and philosophy, that fact was vital. The ideas of John Leslie's work of 1569, discussing the principle of the legality of

[4] For a thorough treatment of this material see Ascoli, *op. cit.*, pp. 131-151.

[5] Cf. Belleforest, *L'Innocence de la tres illustre, tres chaste et debonnaire princesse, Madame Marie Royne d'Escosse*, 1572.

[6] Cf. Part III, *La Chambre Dorée*, in which d'Aubigné praises Elizabeth's firm rule in both domestic and foreign affairs.

government by woman,[7] appeared four years later in the French work of David Chambre: *Discours de la legitime succession des femmes aux possessions de leurs parents, et du gouvernement des princesses aux empires et aux royaumes.* In 1580 Leslie himself published at Reims, with a clever dedication to Catherine de' Medici, his views on the justification of women's rule, *De illustrium faeminarum in republica administranda ac ferendis legibus authoritate.* The French with their regard for the Salic Law[8] showed their natural curiosity in any theory so different from their own, and perhaps it is this curiosity that made them look upon Elizabeth's reign with such eager interest.

The trial and execution of the Queen of Scots brought a shower of brochures and pamphlets. Estienne Pasquier in his *Recherches de la France*[9] recounted Mary's spirited reply to her judges; Pomponne de Bellièvre, special ambassador to England, attempted to dissuade Elizabeth from taking the fatal step,[10] and when all such endeavors failed, authors burst forth against the stony-hearted monarch who could sanction so heinous a crime. Brantôme pathetically described Mary's last moments, as did Guillaume du Vair in his *Oraison Funèbre;* Adam Blackwood circulated his *Martyre de la Royne d'Escosse, douairière de France,* with an appeal to all Christian princes to make war on the monster Elizabeth, incarnation of every wickedness and vice.

The seventeenth century continued its interest in the Tudor dynasts: Madame de La Fayette gave a portrait of Queen Elizabeth in her *Princesse de Clèves* (1678), and Fontenelle in his *Dialogues des Morts* (1685) used several members of the royal family as his interlocutors. For example, we find Queen Elizabeth interviewing her French suitor, le Duc d'Alençon, Anne Boleyn discussing feminine attractions with la Duchesse de

[7] A defence of the Honour of the right high, mighty and noble princess Marie—with a declaration as well of her right, title and interest to the succession of the crown of England, as that the regiment of women is conformable to the law of God and nature.

[8] Cf. Guillaume du Vair, *Suasion de l'arrest donnée au parlement pour la manutention de la loi salique, Œuvres Complètes,* 1641, pp. 601-607.

[9] Edition of 1621, VI, ch. XV, p. 502.

[10] *Harangue faicte à la Royne d'Angleterre pour la desmouvoir de n'entreprendre aucune iurisdiction sur la Royne d'Escosse.*

Valentinois, and Mary, sister of Henry VIII, debating on social position with Anne de Bretagne.

At the threshold of the eighteenth century the historians Leti, Larrey, and Rapin-Thoyras [11] were interested in this period of English history. All of them liberals in their political views, they found it necessary to publish their works in Holland, where they might express their opinions with greater freedom. A little later came Voltaire with his *Henriade* and his *Dictionnaire philosophique,* each containing a eulogy of Queen Elizabeth. Nor did the nineteenth century with its enthusiasm for the historical novel forget the Tudor sovereigns.

In the foregoing brief résumé we have endeavored to point out the general interest of the French in the Tudor dynasts. What rôle, then, did the theater play in presenting the Tudors to the French people? The drama, most popular of all literary genres, could not fail to have its part in this presentation of the Tudor monarchs to their French neighbors, and we shall now try to examine what influence the drama has exerted in acquainting the great French public with Tudor history.

Although the seventeenth century has been characterized as showing an interest particularly in subjects of Greek and Roman antiquity, we find at least ten plays dealing with English history of the Tudor period. In the year 1601 with the *Escossoise* of Antoine de Montchrestien we have the first manifestation of interest in the Tudor dynasty. This tragedy, which portrays the last hours of Mary Queen of Scots, antedates by nearly forty years any other dramatic work concerning the Tudors. Toward the middle of the century La Calprenède added to the repertory with one tragedy on the Lady Jane Grey affair, entitled *Ieanne Reyne d'Angleterre* (1638), and another on the romance of Elizabeth and her favorite, Essex, entitled *Le Comte d'Essex*

[11] For a treatment of their work see Joseph Dedieu, *Montesquieu et la tradition politique anglaise en France,* Paris, Librairie Victor Lecoffre, J. Gabalda & Cie., 1909.

Gregorio Leti (1630-1701) published a history of Elizabeth at Amsterdam in 1693 which passed into several French translations.

Isaac de Larrey (1638-1719) published his *Histoire d'Angleterre* at Rotterdam, 1697-1713.

Rapin de Thoyras (1661-1725) published his *Histoire d'Angleterre* at the Hague in 1724.

(1639). The former subject had no reverberations until the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, but the latter evoked tragedies from Thomas Corneille and the abbé Claude Boyer, both in the same year, 1678. The Mary Queen of Scots theme, initiated by Montchrestien, was resumed by Regnault in his *Marie Stuart, Reyne d'Ecosse* (1639) and later by Edme Boursault under the same title in 1683. Henry VIII also received consideration in the tragedy of Puget de La Serre called *Thomas Morus, ou le Triomphe de la foy & la constance* (1642). All the Tudor dynasts except Henry VII and Edward VI, who were not to be treated until the nineteenth century, came to the attention of seventeenth-century playwrights.

Although Montchrestien's tragedy belongs to a previous period, to the dramatic school of the sixteenth-century authors, Jodelle and Garnier, the other productions fall into the school of seventeenth-century classicism, which slowly evolved toward 1650—tragedies of simple, logical plot, of clear character delineation, of deep psychological penetration and written in sonorous alexandrines.[12]

In the early part of the eighteenth century, interest in the Tudors did not generally find expression in the drama; only one play, the *Marie Stuart* (1734) of François Tronchin, was produced. But toward the end of the century came more dramatic works: the Jane Grey story was resuscitated by La Place in 1777 and ten years later by Madame de Staël; Count Guibert wrote a tragedy on Anne Boleyn in 1777, though it was not published until 1820; Marie-Joseph Chénier gave his portrait of the Tyrant in *Henri VIII* (1791); another Mary Stuart play, this one by the obscure author, Doigny du Ponceau, though written in the latter part of the eighteenth century did not reach the public until 1820. In fact, only two of the eighteenth-century productions actually reached the stage—the tragedy of Tronchin on Mary Queen of Scots and that of Chénier on Henry VIII. The Tudors do not come into the public eye to make a real and permanent impression until the nineteenth century.

With the melodrama of the early nineteenth century these

[12] For a treatment of French classicism see Emile Faguet's *Drame Ancien, Drame Moderne*, Paris, Armand Colin, 1909, and C. H. C. Wright's *French Classicism*, Cambridge, Harvard Press, 1920.

English dynasts veritably pervade the French theaters.[13] Henry VII, not treated heretofore, makes his début before the Parisian footlights in *vaudevilles* and *drames historiques,* relating the impostures of Lambert Simnel and Perkin Warbeck, which arose during his reign before he could secure a peaceful realm to his posterity. In this period Henry VIII receives more complete treatment: the seventeenth century had told only of his repudiating Catherine of Aragon, the late eighteenth century had given two dramas recounting the death of Anne Boleyn; now with the nineteenth century come not only repetitions of these themes, in the *Thomas Morus* (1826) of Drap-Arnaud and the *Anne Boulen* (1821) of "Frédéric" (Dupetit Méré), but plays on Henry's other wives—the *Catherine Howard* (1834) of Alexandre Dumas père and *Les Trois Catherine* (1830) of Duport and Monnais. The Lady Jane Grey theme reappears in plays by Leblanc (1834), Alexandre Soumet (1844), Carénou (1850) and Nus and Brot (1856).

Foreign literatures did not fail to exert their influence on the French treatment of the Tudors. In the first decade of the nineteenth century, Schiller's *Maria Stuart* had been discussed in Parisian salons; Madame de Staël had given an enthusiastic analysis of certain scenes in her *De l'Allemagne* (1810), and in 1820 Pierre-Antoine Lebrun produced a successful adaptation of the tragedy at the Comédie Française. Lebrun's work started the vogue of making adaptations of Schiller's work, and the whole nineteenth century saw successive repetitions of the theme, not only in tragedies written for the professional stage, but also in dramatic productions intended for sectarian schools. In the latter works the character of Mary Stuart is purified, and she assumes all the characteristics of the religious martyr, resembling the type found earlier in the seventeenth-century Latin plays, performed by students of schools under the direction of the Jesuits and other religious orders. The Queen of Scots, so alluring to people's imaginations, became the subject also for

[13] The historical verity of these productions is commented on in the *Journal de Paris* of December 15, 1815: "Depuis quelque temps les auteurs des Boulevards se sont lassés de nous donner des sujets d'invention; ils mettent maintenant l'histoire en pièce. Malheur à ceux qui croiront à leurs contes dramatiques; on court risque en voulant parler d'histoire de faire d'après eux d'étranges bévues."

many anonymous works; aspiring young authors who possessed more ambition than talent wrote tragedies on the misfortunes of Mary Stuart and thereby felt released from the dramatic urge. These plays, never publicly performed, and printed usually only at the author's expense, cannot be classed as real literature, but they serve to show the immense interest taken in Schiller's tragedy.

Besides the Mary Stuart theme, Schiller also in some measure influenced the French treatment of Henry VII. As has already been stated, the principal interest in the reign of this monarch proved to be the two impostures which confronted him toward the outset of his rule. Although the principal source of the plays on Lambert Simnel and Perkin Warbeck is an historical novel by Dorion, published in 1819, the *esquisse* of a tragedy on Warbeck which Schiller made in 1798, and which appeared in a French translation of Amable de Barante in 1821, exerted a certain influence on the French playwrights who within three years produced four plays on the subject: Picard and Empis gave *Lambert Simnel ou le Mannequin politique* (1827); Théaulon with other collaborators produced a *vaudeville, Perkins Warbec ou le Commis Marchand* (1827); Fontan the following year saw the performance of his *Perkins Warbec* at the Odéon, and in 1830 Simonnin with two other collaborators gave *Le Pâtissier Usurpateur.*

Not only Schiller, but Sir Walter Scott affected the fate of the Tudors in nineteenth-century French drama.[14] His novel, *The Abbot,* underwent many adaptations at the hands of Pixerécourt and the other melodramatists, but, since that novel deals with a period in the life of Mary Queen of Scots prior to her intimate relations with Queen Elizabeth, it does not concern the present study. His *Kenilworth,* on the other hand, with its glowing picture of the pomp and pageantry of Elizabeth's reign, its love-story, its villain, and its dramatic dénouement, deals with the most important of the Tudor monarchs in such an engaging manner as to offer rich material for playwrights. Immediately after the appearance of the French translation in 1821, four authors began making adaptations for the stage:

[14] For the influence of Scott on French drama see F. W. M. Draper, *The Rise and Fall of French Romantic Drama,* London, Constable, 1923, chap. II.

while Boirie and Lemaire made a melodrama for the Porte-Saint-Martin, Scribe composed a libretto for Auber's opera, and Victor Hugo started collaborating with Alexandre Soumet on a drama.

The Kenilworth episode brought a new theme on Queen Elizabeth into French drama, but it did not mean an abandonment of themes already treated. The Essex story, already used three times in the seventeenth-century classical tragedy by La Calprenède, Thomas Corneille, and the abbé Boyer, now took on more colorful details and romantic embroiderings in the nineteenth-century plays of Ancelot (*Elisabeth d'Angleterre,* 1829) and Couturier (*Le Comte d'Essex,* 1868).

Shakespeare's influence also, attested by Hugo, Gautier, and Dumas, though it does not show directly in any single play, is apparent in several, as will be pointed out in succeeding chapters. The general influence of the poet pervades the literature of this period, as is shown by the frequent allusions to his relations with the Tudor monarchs or to the nobles closely connected with the crown. In the concluding chapter we shall see to what extent he has been brought into plays dealing with the Tudor sovereigns, and in what measure historical facts have been distorted in order to introduce the great poet as an element of local color.

Not only the legitimate stage drew its material from this period of English history; the opera, too, found subjects in the study of Tudor dynasts. The Italian Felice Romani had written a libretto for Donizetti's *Anna Bolena* which Castil Blaze translated into French for French performances. Another Donizetti opera, this one on the Earl of Essex theme, with words by Salvador Cammarano, was translated into French by Etienne Monnier and produced at Rouen in 1841. Scribe collaborated with Mélesville for the libretto of Auber's *Leicester,* one of the *Kenilworth* adaptations which played at the Opéra Comique in 1823, and Théodore Anne wrote the words for Niedermeyer's *Marie Stuart,* played for the first time at the Théâtre de l'Académie Royale de Musique in 1844. A *scène lyrique* of Edmond Delière retold the story of Catherine Howard (1877). Apart from the entirely musical productions, we find music playing an important rôle also in the melodramas and the

romantic dramas. Snatches of song creep into Dumas' *Catherine Howard* and Hugo's *Marie Tudor.*

The seventeenth-century productions on the Tudors could be easily classed as classical tragedies—the five acts, the "style noble," the alexandrines, the conception of the tragic character—all these elements conformed to that category. And the eighteenth-century productions followed their classical models. But the nineteenth-century plays do not so easily fall into any one *genre.* Besides a host of *mélodrames,* we have *vaudevilles, scènes historiques,* and romantic dramas à la Dumas and Victor Hugo, which no longer abide by the regular forms and which possess certain elements different from the old conception of dramatic technique. The *mélodrame,* an outgrowth of the eighteenth-century popular tragedy,[15] cultivates the horrible, mingles the comic and the tragic, stresses external action, and provides the happy ending in which virtue is always rewarded and vice overwhelmed. In melodrama we have no real opposition of two forces, each of which contains an element of right and an element of wrong. Alexander Lacey [16] thus distinguishes the melodrama from real tragedy:

> There is nothing of that sense of awe in the presence of something heroic and grand, of something in human nature that conquers death, which we are conscious of in real tragedy. The hero or heroine represents nothing universal or profound in human nature.

Melodrama uses all the stage conventions, the monologue, the aside, the stage-whisper, eavesdroppings, the revelation of important secrets, lost letters, presentiments of danger, and "la voix du sang." We do not fail to have a spy, a midnight scene in a dungeon, a conspiracy, secret passages or stairways and

[15] See Jules Marsan, "Le Mélodrame et Guilbert de Pixerécourt," *Revue d'Histoire littéraire de la France,* 1900, pp. 196-197: "C'est vers un théâtre populaire, en effet, que nous conduit l'évolution un peu confuse de l'art dramatique au dix-huitième siècle. Le mélodrame historique—intrigues compliquées où s'ébattront les plus invraisemblables fantoches, en des décors évocateurs de vagues souvenirs—est bien le véritable terme de cette marche de la tragédie s'adressant à un public de plus en plus nombreux renonçant aux fines analyses de jadis, avide de mouvement sous prétexte de vie."

[16] Alexander Lacey, *Pixerécourt and the French Romantic Drama,* University of Toronto Press, 1928, p. 14.

caverns as hiding-places. The characters, too, differ from those found in seventeenth-century productions: the hero is no longer the classical hero, not too good and not too bad, who has committed some fault for which Fate punishes him more than he deserves; the hero of the melodrama is the paragon of all virtues, over-courageous, and always victorious in the struggle with the villain.

The romantic drama, which evolves toward 1830, has been shown to be in most respects a direct outgrowth of the melodrama,[17] with its similar characterization, its external action, the use of grottoes and caverns, and the presence of the sinister executioner.[18] Like the melodrama it offers "a feast for the eyes"; costumes and settings provide a part of that "couleur locale" which so preoccupied the romantics, and from a description of Hugo's *Amy Robsart* or *Marie Tudor* we can judge how gorgeously the plays were mounted. The romantics, like Pixerécourt, wanted to make the past live again, but beyond picturesque details and historical costumes we rarely find the reconstruction of the Tudor period. Very often, in fact, the historical setting serves merely as a screen behind which the authors set forth their political views. For the cry of the romantics is "Liberty!" In the plays on Henry VII, for example, we have allusions to the divorce problem, the political situation, or the anti-clerical movement of the early nineteenth century rather than to Tudor history.

The change of dramatic form brought a change also in theaters, and the 1820's saw the Tudors migrate from the Théâtre Français to the Boulevards. At the Gaîté, the Ambigu-Comique, and the Porte-Saint-Martin the Tudors of the melodrama, at the Gymnase (Théâtre Madame) the Tudors of the *vaudeville,* and again at the Porte-Saint-Martin the Tudors of romantic drama, came to popular notice. The romantics, to be sure, had tried to make a reputation at the Théâtre Français; Hugo had written in verse, hoping to make a permanent literary contribution to French drama, but both he and Dumas had experienced

[17] See Lacey, *op. cit.*, chaps. 2-6, and F. W. M. Draper, *op. cit.*, pp. 169-170; J. F. Mason, *The Melodrama in France from the Revolution to the Beginning of Romantic Drama,* partially published, Johns Hopkins University Dissertation, 1911, chapter VI.

[18] Found in *Catherine Howard, Marie Tudor, Lord Surrey.*

such antagonistic feeling with the actors, Mlle Mars and Firmin, that they gave their *Marie Tudor* and *Catherine Howard* to the Porte-Saint-Martin, home of the "bon gros mélo," where Marie Dorval, Mlle Georges, Bocage, and Lockroy delighted their popular audiences. The identity of the theaters forges one more link between melodrama and romantic drama.

Of course, during this period the plays performed were not all published. Alexandre Soumet's *Emilia,* though produced at the Théâtre Français, never came out in print; Ancelot's *Warbeck* enjoyed no more than a reading by the committee; Charles Brifaut's *Jeanne Gray* enjoyed a performance but no publication, and the *Jane Gray* of Emile Bonnechose had neither. Alfred de Musset's plan for a *Comte d'Essex* to which Eggli [19] alludes, and Victor Hugo's plan for a tragedy on Mary Stuart [20] never materialized.

In the twentieth century almost no dramas have appeared on the Tudors. Two short plays on the Thomas More theme, a sensational melodrama on one of Henry VIII's amours, and an adaptation of the Baroness Orczy's novel, *The Tangled Skein,* performed at the Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt, complete the list. And since the trend at present is away from the historical play to the drama of ideas and impressions, there seems no probability of their returning soon to the French stage.

After considering all the subjects presented, one is forced to admit that the Tudors have evoked no masterpieces in French drama, no work of universal fame like Schiller's *Maria Stuart.* While the Queen of Scots theme became in France too much a vehicle for sectarian propaganda, the Mary Tudor subject degenerated into pure melodrama, as did many of the plays on Henry VIII. The Essex theme has, on the whole, received the most successful treatment, inspiring not only La Calprenède's best work, but one of Thomas Corneille's most celebrated tragedies.

The foregoing survey of French plays which have been produced concerning the Tudors indicates their fame in French

[19] Edmond Eggli, *Schiller et le Romantisme Français,* Paris, Gamber, 1927, vol. II, p. 373.

[20] Mentioned by Karl Kipka in his *Maria Stuart im Drama der Weltliteratur,* Leipzig, 1907, p. 405.

dramatic literature. In the following chapters we shall see what has been their fate, how they have been treated by various dramatists in different periods, and what purposes they have served in certain cases. Since by viewing each monarch separately we can best perceive how each has fared in French drama, the subject will be divided according to sovereigns rather than chronologically, and the plays which concern them studied in detail. From such a study we shall be able to judge to just what extent French dramatists have reflected the Tudor Age, and how exact a picture they have given of sixteenth-century England.

CHAPTER II

Henry VII

The first of the Tudor monarchs, though he achieved a great and lasting work for England's development and prepared the country for that period of fame and prosperity which it was later to enjoy, nevertheless does not possess the personal magnetism of his predecessors or successors. Professor Kennedy[1] characterizes his rule thus:

> Henry's reign lies between two periods with a more fascinating history—the wars of the Roses and the break with Rome. . . . There is no insane but kaleidoscopic civil war. There is no exciting game in politics and religion. There are no big men and no big methods. . . . It is a period of transition and national uncertainty, and such periods do not usually attract as much attention as those in which home and foreign politics, and commercial and industrial progress are secure and prominent.

Henry's strong hand and wise head did not make him a popular monarch and the period of his rule has therefore not been adequately studied by either historians or men of letters. In the field of French drama Henry's reign does not appear to have been noted at all until the nineteenth century, when the absorbing interest in historical subjects led certain authors to explore that period, with the result that we now have at least a few plays treating of his rule. In them Henry VII does not figure as the protagonist; in the majority, in fact, he is merely mentioned. The events of his reign which seem most to have appealed to dramatists are his accession to the throne after the devastating War of the Roses, and the two impostures which confronted him in the early years of his sovereignty.

The play regarding Henry's accession is entitled *Richard III*, "tragédie en 5 actes et en vers, de Mme Lem . . ."[2] but unfortunately we know little of the authoress beyond the fact that her name was Lemaignien. Quérard[3] lists this as her

[1] W. P. M. Kennedy, *Studies in Tudor History*, London, Constable & Co., 1916, p. 1.

[2] Published in Paris, A, Egron; Barba, 1818, in-8.

[3] J. M. Quérard, *La France Littéraire*, Paris, Firmin Didot, 1827.

only play and from the preface we learn that it was never produced. While the general interest in the subject may have come from Shakespeare's *Richard III,* the tragedy shows no direct influence of the English work. The dramatist alludes to Henry VII as the young hero who shall bring peace to the country by his union with Elizabeth of York, daughter of Edward IV. The usurper Richard himself is haunted by dreams in which he believes he hears Edward IV thus addressing young Henry:

> Cher et dernier espoir de la triste Angleterre,
> Lui dit-il, quel rayon t'environne et m'éclaire?
> Anglais, soyez heureux, bénissez ce héros;
> Il punira le crime, il vengera vos maux. (Act III, scene I)

Richard, confiding in his companion Catesbi, would make one last desperate effort against his enemy, but on the battlefield of Bosworth he finds only death, and his victorious successor secures peace to a country worn by three centuries of wretchedness and war. The principal character of the play is Elizabeth of York, the bitter enemy of Richard III, who would commit any deed, murder even, to see him dashed from the throne. Henry VII does not appear at all, but one feels his dominating presence in every act of the drama, quite as one is conscious of Pompey's influence in Corneille's *Mort de Pompée,* though here again the Roman general does not figure in the cast of characters.

The two cases of imposture during Henry VII's reign—the Lambert Simnel rebellion and the Perkin Warbeck uprising—brought out further dramatic literature. Lambert Simnel, a comely pastryman, son of a joiner in Oxford, was induced by certain disaffected Yorkists to impersonate the Earl of Warwick,[4] imprisoned by Henry in the Tower, and thus became the tool of Henry's enemies to wrest the crown from the legitimate monarch. Henry met the opposing forces at Stoke-on-Trent, June 16, 1487, and quelled the rebellion. In that battle fell the leaders, the Earl of Lincoln, and Martin Swart, colonel of the German troops, sent by Margaret of Burgundy, sister of Edward IV, who was vexed at the thought that the House of

[4] Edward (1475-1499) eldest son of George Plantagenet, Duke of Clarence, brother of Edward IV.

York should no longer rule England. Henry spared Lambert Simnel,[5] recognizing that he was but the tool of others.

From this historical event we have a five-act comedy by Picard [6] and Empis [7] entitled *Lambert Simnel ou le Mannequin politique,* performed for the first time at the Théâtre Français, March 24, 1827.[8] Here again Henry VII does not figure as a character and the other personages make only occasional reference to him. Stanley, the protagonist, stands between the two parties: although he has helped put Henry VII of the House of Lancaster on the throne, his love for the Duchess of Norfolk, who favors the Earl of Warwick, draws him to the side of the House of York. Stanley's character shows up clearly in a remark made by one of the townsmen concerning him, "toujours prêt à changer de sentiment pour ne pas changer de place," and we shall see him act accordingly in the course of the play. When the rumor that the Earl of Warwick has escaped from his prison and that troops loyal to the House of York are helping him to regain his throne is shown to be a false report, and when Stanley finds that the Yorkists are advancing only an impostor in Warwick's place, his Yorkist loyalties begin to waver. Although the Duchess of Norfolk tries to enlist him definitely on the side of the Yorkists, promising that Elizabeth, wife of Henry VII, will favor the Yorkists, Stanley sees the grave danger in serving the interests of the queen and therefore makes a *volte-face* in favor of Henry VII. Nor is the Duchess more successful in persuading her other partisans, who, when they find they must fight, not for Warwick, who is only an impostor, but for Elizabeth of York, let the whole conspiracy

[5] See Francis Bacon, *History of Henry VII, Works,* 10 vols., London, 1803, vol. V, p. 33: "For Lambert, the King would not take his life, both out of magnanimity taking him as an image of wax, that others had tempered and molded; and likewise out of wisdom, thinking that if he suffered death he would be forgotten too soon; but being kept alive he would be a continual spectacle and a kind of remedy against the like enchantment of people in time to come."

[6] Louis-Benoît Picard (1769-1828), author of many historical plays and *comédies de mœurs,* actor, and director of the Opéra and the Odéon.

[7] Adolphe J. S. Empis, author of historical dramas and political comedies. Empis was elected to the French Academy in 1847.

[8] Published in Paris, by Dupont, 1827.

fall. The royal troops march into town, led by no other than Stanley, and one of Henry's officers, Stafford, dictates the sovereign's terms: Stanley shall go into exile, the Duchess of Norfolk shall enter a convent, and the impostor, Lambert Simnel, shall become a servant in the royal kitchens.[9]

The play suffers from lack of local color and from poor characterization. Henry VII at one point is named "habile et vaillant" and by Major Broughton he is termed "le pacifique Henri VII," contemptuous of the military class, but beyond that we learn little of him. With its dearth of historical background, the comedy offers little material for a study of the Tudors in French drama. As a means of expressing political ideas, however, it may have served its end; we find this interesting speech regarding the divorce problem:

> Traîtée avec dureté par Henri qui tarde sans cesse à la faire couronner elle (Elizabeth) s'empressera de solliciter un divorce.
>
> (Act III, scene VIII)

According to historical accounts, Henry VII proved a model husband, treating his wife with proper decorum, but the nineteenth-century writers were agitating laws for divorce which the Consulate had passed, and the Restoration repealed.

We have a second play on the Lambert Simnel imposture entitled *Le Pâtissier Usurpateur,* by Simonnin, Benjamin Antier and Théodore Nézel, played for the first time at the Théâtre de la Gaîté, December 4, 1830.[10] The comedy, coming so soon after the July Revolution, contains, of course, many allusions to governments.

The first act, in the interior of a mill, shows us the conspirators plotting against Henry VII because he does not submit to the nobles. The barons proceed to appoint themselves and all their relatives to important official positions in the government which they intend to establish, and immediately fall to quarreling over the share each shall receive. But plans for the conspiracy cannot develop since the Earl of Warwick whom they

[9] Cf. Bacon, *op. cit.*, p. 33: "He turned a broach that had worn a crown. . . . And afterwards he was preferred to be one of the King's falconers."

[10] Published in Paris by P.-J. Hardy, rue du Temple, 1831.

would place on the throne is still imprisoned in the Tower. Their only means therefore rests in finding a youth who resembles Warwick in physical appearance, in spreading the news of his escape from the Tower, and later, when he is really freed, in disposing of the "figurant." Richard Simon, an ambitious and unscrupulous priest, who desires a bishopric in the new government, leads the conspirators to the pastry-shop of young Lambert Simnel, shows them the lad's striking resemblance to Warwick, and proceeds to fill the boy's head with plans of revolt. Lambert cannot feel the noble aspirations they would instill in him, but acquiesces in their demands and, accompanying them to Dublin, is there set up as king. The more he observes their projects, however, the more out of sympathy he feels with the whole conspiracy, and he is not greatly surprised, after the defeat of the rebels, to overhear them plotting to deliver him to the king in order to save their own lives. The last act shows us Simnel as a fugitive wandering through the royal palace, and finding his own death-warrant on Henry's table awaiting the king's signature. Suddenly he finds himself confronted by the monarch himself, and, after trying to pass himself off as a new serving man, suddenly decides to risk all and tell his story. Henry VII in his great wisdom pardons the boy and makes him chef of his kitchen.

In several scenes the play descends to pure farce, as, for example, when Lambert absurdly asks whether Henry VII is not going to take his place in the pastry-shop while he plays the rôle of sovereign in Dublin, or when Lambert objects to the servants' standing around watching while he eats the poor quality of pastry served him. Certain satirical remarks on government occur in the apportioning of the officials, and one finds the usual echoes of democratic sentiment characteristic of this period of 1830. Lambert at a council learns that the lands of the Lancastrian barons are to be confiscated to the benefit of the populace, but, on reading the names, notices that only the Yorkist barons profit by the transfer. Immediately he objects and demands that the "peuple" receive their share also. At the very outset of the play he has clearly enunciated his democratic idea of society:

Nous sommes tous faits de la même pâte et jetés dans le même moule:

le hasard seul fait les chanceliers et les ministres . . . heureux quand il tombe sur les bons. (Act II, scene II)

He does not hesitate, either, to express his ideas on government to the king himself:

Celui qui tient les rênes de l'Etat est un cocher dont les ministres sont les postillons; s'ils sont maladroits ils vous font verser . . . il faut donc bien choisir vos ministres ou vos postillons, n'importe . . . aimez le peuple, . . . vous verrez comme il vous le rendra . . . un prince aimé de son peuple peut défier toutes les puissances! (Act V, scene III)

Though the play follows the main points of history, one can note certain modifications. The *Rotuli Parliamentorum* of England VI, 397 give Lambert's age as ten years and call him "sonne to Thomas Symnell, late of Oxford joynoure," while Francis Bacon in his *History of Henry VII* gives the following description: "a baker's son of the age of some fifteen years, a comely youth and well-favoured, not without some extraordinary dignity and grace of aspect."[11] The setting of the fourth act in the powder-mine in which Lambert threatens to fire his pistols, thus exploding all the conspirators, cannot be proved historical; it is evidently used by the authors to augment the element of horror and produce a melodramatic climax. Henry himself appears more or less in keeping with his historical portrait: keen and shrewd, patient and self-controlled, looking ever toward the best means of securing a firm rule.

The second uprising in Henry's reign was that of Perkin Warbeck, a native of Tournai, Picardy, son of humble parents, who went to Ireland as an adventurer and there at the instigation of the Yorkists set himself up, first as the bastard of Richard III, then as the son of the Duke of Clarence, and finally as Edward IV's second son, whom all thought to have been murdered in the Tower. Aided by Irish lords and by the Scotch, as well as by Margaret of Burgundy, Perkin Warbeck long troubled Henry, but finally met defeat at Exeter and was there taken prisoner. Henry spared his life, but Perkin attempted escape from his prison, and his rash folly subsequently led him to the scaffold. The rebellion of Perkin Warbeck and his supporters proved a much more serious affair than had been the episode of young

[11] *Op. cit.*, p. 20.

Lambert Simnel, though French dramatists have not always treated it in this manner.

At about the time that Picard and Empis were giving their *Lambert Simnel* at the Théâtre Français, another group of collaborators, Théaulon,[12] Brazier, and Carmouche, performed a two-act *vaudeville historique* entitled *Perkins Warbec ou le Commis Marchand* at the Théâtre de Madame.[13] The plot runs briefly as follows: Margaret of Burgundy, aunt of the imprisoned Duke of York, would regain the English throne for her nephew by presenting a pseudo-duke, Perkins Warbec, the foster-brother of the Duke of York. Young Perkins, a clerk in his father's dry-goods store in Tournay, and in no way fitted for such a rôle, nevertheless leaves his native town and his fiancée Marianne to answer Marguerite's call. He joins the Yorkists at Bruges and is there presented to the court, but, before his awkward manners can be detected or his imposture materialize, the peace is signed between Margaret of Burgundy and Henry VII. Perkins' father, who has come to Bruges to claim his share in the kingdom, can do nothing but take home his son, resigned now to marry his fiancée, Marianne, and to continue the dry-goods business of his father.

The work lacks all historical interest and truth; it can be considered only as a light comedy written simply to amuse an audience of no profound mental calibre. Fortunately there came in the following year a more serious dramatic production on the subject—Louis-Marie Fontan's[14] five-act historical drama entitled *Perkins Warbec*, first played at the Théâtre Royal de l'Odéon, May 6, 1828.

The author himself had suffered a stormy career in political

[12] Théaulon de Lambert (1787-1841), a fecund dramatist who is said to have had his hand in as many as fifty productions in a single year. His collaborators Nicolas Brazier (1783-1838), and Pierre F. A. Carmouche, were both *vaudevillistes*.

[13] Performed May 15, 1827 and published the same year by Barba.

[14] Born at Lorient, November 4, 1801; died at Thiais near Paris, October 10, 1839. To escape imprisonment in prosecution of his attacks on the absolutist government he wandered through Belgium, Holland, and Prussia, but was everywhere treated so harshly that he returned to France where he offered himself up to justice. Fontan remained imprisoned at Poissy until the Revolution of 1830.

journalism, having been imprisoned for his attacks on Charles X, and this turbulent experience perhaps lent color to his dramatic writing. At least, in this play one finds somber and mysterious undercurrents in keeping with the *mélodrame* of the early part of the century. Perkins Warbec is here portrayed as the natural son of Edward IV by the courtesan Meggy, now an ugly old woman of the Irish coast.[15] Perkins is ignorant of his noble origin, but like Hugo's heroes, the orphan wanderer suspecting his royal blood, is easily persuaded by Lord Stanley[16] to accept the crown. Meggy, who has once protected Henry VII against Richard III, vows her son shall not fight Henry now, and therefore tells Perkins she is his mother though she still keeps back from him the fact that his father was Edward IV. But the young lad cannot be turned from his purpose,, so Meggy decides to warn Henry secretly of his danger, and incidentally secure from the monarch a full pardon for her son. Some of Perkins' followers revolt and sow sedition in his camp by announcing he is only an impostor of ignoble birth. Meggy now reveals to her son his true origin, thus confronting the young hero with the struggle between a desire to quiet the rebels by proclaiming his illustrious rank, and a horror of divulging his mother's shame. Finally he admits to his men that he is of humble birth, but by a stirring speech declares that he will lead them to a glorious victory against the tyrant:

> Briser le joug honteux qui pèse sur vos fronts
> Mourir pour la patrie ou venger ses affronts.
>
> (Act IV, scene X)

Perkins suffers defeat on the battlefield, and hearing that his death-sentence is signed, goes off heroically to his execution.

In this drama Perkins appears as an exalted idealist, imbued with noble aspirations and beset with torturing problems which demand the will of a Cornelian hero for their solution. A good foil for his heroism is the materialistic Lambert Simnel, who resides at King Henry's court in the capacity of king's falconer. He relates to Perkins the details of his own conspiracy, telling

[15] Francis Bacon hints at this origin, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

[16] Sir William Stanley (circa 1435-1495), beheaded for treason in the Perkin Warbeck imposture.

how he was obliged to choose between "la honte et la mort" and how he chose the former because he was not strong enough for the latter. In the last act, when Perkins is defeated, Simnel comes to him bringing the king's pardon if the rebel will consent to become, like him, a falconer. Perkins, outraged at this offer, indignantly replies:

> Dis-lui que sa clémence
> Sera toujours pour moi la plus cruelle offense!
> Sur l'échafaud sanglant qu'il me fasse monter!
> Voilà le seul bienfait que j'en daigne accepter. (Act V, scene X)

And in the final scene when he says farewell to his mother and his friend Lincoln as he prepares to go off to his execution he turns to the cowardly Lambert and cries contemptuously:

> Toi, viens voir comme on meurt quand on a du courage!
> (Act V, scene XII)

Henry himself is again pictured as the sagacious monarch that history shows us, astute in his dealings with his enemies, and choosing for them that fate which will best secure his own position on the throne. He makes no rash promises to Meggy concerning her son's pardon, and leaves himself free to act as the occasion shall demand. His foresight has led him to have a portrait of the impostor secretly executed, and with it he quickly recognizes Perkins when the youth in disguise makes a nightly visit to the royal palace.

The sources of these plays of 1827-1830 on Henry VII have been discussed by Eggli in his *Schiller et le Romantisme français,* in which he shows that the principal source is an historical novel by Claude-Auguste Dorion in the style of Walter Scott, entitled *Perkins Warbeck, faux duc d'York,* which appeared in 1819. Eggli believes that Schiller's plan of a tragedy, *Warbeck* made in 1798 and translated into French in 1821, had its influence also, especially on Fontan's drama:

> C'est d'abord la conception même du personnage de Warbeck, présenté comme un usurpateur qui prend peu à peu les sentiments de son rôle, s'étonnant lui-même de trouver en son cœur des ressources qui ne sont pas de sa condition, jusqu'au moment où la révélation de son origine royale lui apporte l'explication de cette énigme. D'autre part Fontan doit vraisemblablement à Schiller l'idée de présenter dans la même pièce Warbeck et Simnel et d'établir entre eux une opposition, l'un étant un

imposteur vulgaire qui s'humilie dès qu'il est démasqué, l'autre prenant conscience dans son imposture même d'une nature noble qu'il tient de sa naissance.[17]

Elements of melodrama, evident particularly in the stage-setting of Fontan's play, become ever so much more noticeable in another drama on the Perkin Warbeck conspiracy, called *Marguerite d'York,* by Fournier and Dessarsin, and played for the first time at the Théâtre de la Gaîté, May 23, 1839. Perkins is here represented as the son of Samuel Warbec, a Jew, hanged at Dublin by the Earl of Lincoln to avoid payment of his debts. Perkins would be a Yorkist because of his love for Marie Swart, daughter of the colonel sent by Margaret of Burgundy to aid the Simnel revolt. Hearing now of his father's death, he vows vengeance at the expense of his love—a true Rodrigue renouncing his Chimène. He interests Margaret of Burgundy in his cause because he has previously saved her from brigands on the highway—one of the favorite themes of the *mélodrame*—and she promises aid in his vengeance. Then, noticing his resemblance to King Edward's son, she decides to set him on the throne of England, to restore the House of York, and to defeat her enemies, the House of Lancaster.[18] Margaret in their ensuing interviews falls passionately in love with the young man, hoping by her bounteous favor to him to win his affection in return. But Perkins remains faithful to his old love, and no promises or threats of the willful Duchess can shake his resolution. She therefore decides to play the fairy god-mother, and, after publicly denouncing him as an impostor and imprisoning him, magnanimously offers him a secret means of escape with the object of his affections as well as an opportunity to kill the villainous Lincoln.

In this melodramatic production we get far from historical

[17] *Op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 596.

[18] Francis Bacon, *op. cit.*, p. 28, gives a description of Margaret's character: "This princess, having the spirit of a man and the malice of a woman, abounding in treasure by the greatness of her dower and her provident government, and being childless and without any nearer care, made it her design and enterprise to see the majesty royal of England once again replaced in her house, and had set up King Henry as a mark at whose overthrow all her actions should aim and shoot." Margaret was commonly called Henry's Juno.

facts, leaping suddenly into a fantastic extravagance which forsakes all verisimilitude. The unseemly infatuation of the Duchess for this young upstart and the complicated plot redolent of too much poison and prison are hardly in keeping with the stern and staid English monarch.

After reviewing these plays treating of Henry VII's reign, we are forced to admit that none of them possesses enough literary merit to draw the first Tudor sovereign from the obscurity in which he has long reposed. The enterprise of bringing to Henry VII any prominence in the field of French dramatic literature remains for some future artist; and one doubts its ever being attempted, for Henry's descendants too markedly overshadow him in their wealth of personal attraction.

CHAPTER III

Henry VIII

If Henry VII excited little interest in French drama, his son Henry VIII, on the other hand, has long been a subject of attentive consideration and study. His numerous matrimonial ventures have particularly attracted dramatists' attention and there exists a series of plays on each successive marital experience. Gloomy Catherine of Aragon, haughty Anne Boleyn, meek Jane Seymour, stolid Anne of Cleves, reckless Catherine Howard, dutiful Catherine Parr—all six of Henry's wives in varying measure solicit our regard.

As early as the seventeenth century there appeared a play on the divorce of Catharine of Aragon entitled *Thomas Morus, ou le Triomphe de la foy & la constance,* by Puget de La Serre.[1] The tragedy was first produced in 1641,[2] and according to accounts of the period drew such crowds that at its *première* four door-tenders were suffocated. Guéret in his *Parnasse Réformé* represents La Serre as saying of his production:

> Voilà ce qu'on appelle de bonnes pièces! M. Corneille n'a point de preuves si puissantes de l'excellence des siēnes, et je luy cederay volontiers le pas quand il aura fait tuer cinq Portiers en un seul jour.[2a]

The tragedy shows Henry VIII so infatuated with Anne Boleyn that he goes so far as to alter the religion of the country

[1] Jean Puget de La Serre, born about 1600 at Toulouse, came to Paris in his early manhood and was made historiographer of France. He proved to be such a prolific writer that Saint Amant in the *Poète Crotté* (*Œuvres Complètes*) ed. Livet, Paris, Jannet, 1855, vol. I, p. 222, calls him:

"La Serre
Qui livres sur livres desserre."

Too rapid a worker, La Serre soon fell into mediocrity. He deserves notice, however, as being one of the first authors to write tragedies in prose.

[2] Published by Augustin Courbé, Paris, *privilège* Oct. 26, 1641, *achevé d'imprimer* Jan. 4, 1642, and dedicated to Madame la duchesse d'Esguillon (niece of Richelieu).

[2a] Gabriel Guéret, *Le Parnasee Réformé*, Paris, Jolly, 1671, p. 49.

in order to repudiate Catherine and secure the divorce. Most of his courtiers, uninterested in religious matters, readily yield to the change; one, however, Thomas More, cannot sympathize with the king's actions, and having the courage of his convictions, is unafraid to die for his faith.

In the dedication Puget de La Serre writes:

I'ay si fort épuré cet Ouvrage avant que vous le presenter, que vous n'y trouverez rien de profane. C'est une Histoire où la Constance & la Foy triomphent egalement; & si la tyrannie d'un Prince amoureux la rend toute funeste, vous n'y trouverez que des Martyrs.

Indeed, the characters are purified beyond recognition; not content with changing the characteristic traits of some, the author changes even their names: Anne Boleyn becomes Artenice; her mother (who does not figure in any historical accounts) is known as Amelite; Thomas More's daughter Margaret becomes Clorimene, and the courtiers receive conventional names, Polexandre, Polemon, Lidama, Cleante. Henry VIII, Thomas More, and the Duke of Suffolk keep their own names, and Catherine of Aragon is known only as La Reine. Puget de La Serre calls her "niepce de Charles Quint," whereas she was really his aunt.

In the opening scene the Duke of Suffolk tries to persuade Thomas More to yield to the king's wishes regarding the change in religion, but Thomas More declares he cannot act against his conscience. The Duke of Suffolk, representing the absolutist in the theory of government, states:

On ne raisonne iamais avec son Souverain. Croyez-vous resister tout seul à une Puissance absolue? La cholere des Rois est aussi redoutable que la foudre du ciel. (Act I, scene I)

Thomas More continues to resist the duke's arguments, and Suffolk, when left alone, asserts that Henry VIII will succeed in his plans only if the chancellor is put to death. The first scene presents a foreshadowing of the dénouement, but the action suddenly changes at this point and not until Act IV do we find a continuation of the Thomas More theme.

We now turn to the love-affair of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn; the king in his scenes with Artenice shows us the *précieux* lover speaking in the terms of a degenerated Petrarchist:

Vos larmes me brulent aussi bien que vos regards, comme procédant d'une mesme source de flamme. (Act I, scene IV)

Esteignez donc le feu dont vos yeux ont embrasé mon ame. (*ibid.*)

Des que l'Amour me banda les yeux il m'arracha la Couronne de la teste; et du mesme coup qu'il blessa mon cœur, il me fit tomber le sceptre des mains. (Act III, scene II)

Henry and his courtiers in turn try to persuade Artenice to become the king's mistress, assuring her that such a position carries no disgrace. But Artenice, moved not so much by ambition as was the historical Anne,[3] but rather by virtue, refuses such a position and maintains that only as Henry's legal wife could she give him her love. Even the counsels of her venal mother, Amelite,[4] do not shake her resolution. The king's passion increases at the resistance of Artenice, who finally consents, at her mother's pleadings to accept the crown, provided the king will make her his wife. In the third act, Henry comes to the decision of repudiating Catherine and Artenice agrees to become queen, though Catherine of Aragon warns her of the dangers surrounding her, and Artenice herself feels the inevitability of her downfall.

The fourth act shows us the council-chamber with Henry repudiating his wife and stating that he will change the religion of England. We are now back at the end of Act I, scene I with Thomas More resisting the king who desires to rule absolutely:

Puisque ie suis un des Dieux de la Terre, i'y veux regner absolument selon mon humeur, plustost que selon vos conseils. (Act IV, scene I)

Thomas More declares that if kings are gods on earth, they must do nothing for which men can reproach them; when kings reign as tyrants, they lose the title of sovereign and become in their turn subjects. Henry in anger orders his chancellor to prison. All the other courtiers, indifferent about religious or political questions, flatter Henry and promise to obey his new decrees.

[3] Cf. A. F. Pollard, *History of Henry VIII*, Longmans Green and Co., London, 1913, p. 192: "Her place in English history is due solely to the circumstance that she appealed to the less refined part of Henry's nature; she was preëminent neither in beauty nor in intellect, and her virtue was not of a character to command or deserve the respect of her own or subsequent ages."

[4] The character of Amelite resembles that of Elips' mother whom La Calprenède considered too revolting a woman to put in his *Edouard* (1640).

In the final act, the king and his new queen decide to begin their Reign of Love by pardoning all the prisoners who ask for mercy. Thomas More's daughter, Clorimene, comes asking for her father's life and begging that he be allowed to keep his religion. Henry, refusing this latter request, nevertheless sends the Duke of Suffolk to Thomas More's prison to try to influence him to change his faith. Suffolk failing in this mission, the king decides to use his own powers of persuasion. He summons the prisoner before him and, finding that the promise of riches fails to move him, decides to try threats: he orders the heads of victims already sacrificed because they have rebelled against the royal command to be brought in,[5] but still Thomas More refuses to recant:

> Croyez-vous que ces testes coupées laissent la vostre en repos? Leurs langues quoy que muettes crient vengeance de vos impietez.
> (Act V, scene V)

The martyr courageously goes to his doom amid Henry's menacing words:

> L'exemple de sa punition étonnera les meschans & retiendra les bons dans leur devoir. Il faut que ie me face craindre, si ie ne puis me faire aymer. (Act V, scene V)

The captain of the guards returns to tell of the victim's fortitude at his execution, and the tragedy closes with Clorimene's outburst before the sovereign because of his cruelty toward her father.

A note in the *Catalogue de la Bibliothèque dramatique de M. Soleinne* [6] states that in certain editions the last act was shortened by the omission of the last three scenes. Paul Lacroix suggests that the scenes were suppressed to avoid any uncomplimentary allusions to Anne d'Autriche, Louis XIII, and Richelieu. He considers such a conversation as the following too bold for the period:

> *Le Roi:* Un roi commande ce qu'il veut.
> *Clorimene:* Un homme de bien fait ce qu'il doit.

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[5] The frontispiece of seventeenth-century editions shows a gory scene of several victims' heads reposing in basins on the floor at the foot of the monarch's throne. Such a scene on the stage must have recalled the school of Senecan horrors and shocked the *bienséances*.

[6] Vol. I, p. 232.

Le Roi: Est-ce le devoir d'un subject de s'opposer aux desseins de son prince?
Clorimene: Est-ce le devoir d'un prince d'imposer des lois pleines d'impiété et de sacrilège?
Le Roi: J'ai fait ce qui m'a plu.
Clorimene: Et lui ce qui estoit juste. (Act V, scene VIII)

But one could find speeches bolder than these in several other parts of the play; Thomas More in his interviews with the king spares no words. Paul Lacroix adds that people were too close to the death of Marillac and de Thou for language of this kind. He forgets that de Thou was not executed until 1642 and that the play came out in 1641.[7]

As for the characterization, Catherine of Aragon remains true to her historical picture, a sad, disappointed woman, whose greatest sorrow lies in her unrequited love.[8] La Serre gives only a one-sided picture of Thomas More, making no mention of his eminence as a scholar or of his friendship with Erasmus. Nor does the playwright show More's ironical humor. On the scaffold the victim possessed perfect composure, saying jocosely to the lieutenant who led him to the steps: "I pray thee see me safely up and for my coming down let me shift for myself." Nor does La Serre make mention of More's treatment of Protestant heretics whom he had allowed to be burned at the stake; he presents Thomas More from a purely Catholic point of view. No less Catholic is the view he takes of Henry VIII, whom the Jesuit historian Nicholas Sanders had made tyrannical and dissolute. From this Catholic view in regard to Thomas More and Henry VIII one would be tempted to conclude that Puget de La Serre used the Catholic historians, Sanders, Florimond de Rémond, Hilarion de Coste, or the Italians, Rosso and Pollini, for his sources. Why, then, did he so completely transform the character of Anne Boleyn? Sanders[9] had spread vile

[7] The date of *privilège* is October 26, 1641; the *achevé d'imprimer* January 4, 1642.

[8] Cf. Pollard, *op. cit.*, p. 192: "There is no more pathetic figure in English history nor one condemned to a crueller fate. No breath of scandal touched her fair name or impugned her devotion to Henry." Cf. G. Constant, *La Réforme en Angleterre, le schisme anglican*, Perrin et Cie, Paris, 1930, p. 33.

[9] *De origine ac progressu schismatis anglicani.* A French translation had appeared in 1587.

tales of her birth and her licentious life, first at the French court, then at the English, and his stories have been copied by the French writer, Florimond de Rémond, in his *Naissance de l'Hérésie,* and by Hilarion de Coste in his *Eloges et Vies des Reynes,* in which he calls Anne Boleyn " cette maudite et infame femme, cause de tous les malheurs d'Angleterre." [10] The Italian historian Pollini,[11] taking the same view of Anne Boleyn, makes her wholly responsible for Thomas More's death. He states that Henry VIII would have been content with life-imprisonment for his former chancellor, but Anne Boleyn was not satisfied until, like another Herodiade, she had seen his head cut off.[12] Puget de La Serre in his delineation of Anne's character differs widely from these historians. From the *Mémoires* of Castelnau (Livre II, Chapitre II), he could have gleaned most of the historical facts, and a presentation of Anne Boleyn free from such incriminating charges; but Castelnau makes no mention of More's daughter Margaret (Clorimene) who plays an important rôle in the fifth act of the tragedy. The question of sources, therefore, remains very uncertain.

La Serre wrote his tragedy in prose, perhaps because he could thus compose more rapidly, and prolific rather than careful composition seems to have been his aim. Neither naturalness nor concision marks this author's style.

From the play we get no glimpse of the long years of struggle through which dragged all this question of Catherine's divorce, ending in the establishment of the king's Spiritual Supremacy.[13] The divorce proceedings, begun in 1529, were not settled until

[10] *Op. cit.*, p. 255 (edition of 1647).

[11] Girolamo Pollini, *Historia Ecclesiastica della Rivoluzion d'Inghilterra,* Rome, 1594, p. 112.

[12] The nineteenth-century Italian dramatist, Silvio Pellico, in his *Tommaso Moro* shows, on the other hand, a purified Anne Boleyn who tries to save Thomas More. It is through Anne's intercession that Marguerite reaches her father's prison. See Silvio Pellico, *Opere Complete,* Milano, Pagnoni, 1873.

[13] Pollard, *op. cit.*, pp. 199-200, 212, shows that Henry was asking for no more than his sister Margaret in Scotland and his brother-in-law Brandon had demanded and secured. Louis XII had procured a divorce without trouble. The pope's difficulty lay in the fact that Catherine of Aragon was aunt of the powerful Charles V who had recently sacked Rome.

1533, and Thomas More, though he resigned the chancellorship in 1532, did not suffer the extreme penalty until July 6, 1535. Dramatists, of course, are not to be censured for the liberties they take with historical facts, but they can be criticized for their dramatic technique, and here Puget de La Serre sinned egregiously.[14]

Not until the nineteenth century do we get another treatment of Henry's divorce from Catherine of Aragon. The first recurrence of the theme came from Drap-Arnaud,[15] in his tragedy *Thomas Morus, ou le Divorce de Henri VIII,* first played at the Théâtre Royal de l'Odéon, December 9, 1826.[16] In the "Historique et Critique" the author excuses himself for having what some might consider a double action, summoning to his defense Racine's *Andromaque, Phèdre,* and *Mithridate,* which have suffered similar criticism. He further defends this tragedy by showing that the devotion of Thomas More is so closely bound with Henry's repudiation of Catherine that the two elements fuse into a single action.

Henry and his follower, Norfolk, are lined up against More, Catherine of Aragon, and the Spanish chieftains. More's daughter Marguerite is engaged to the Spaniard, Lirias, who, when he hears of Henry's intended actions toward Thomas More, rouses his compatriots in London to espouse Catherine's interests by rising in conspiracy against the tyrant. As early as the first act we learn of More's resolution to remain faithful to Catherine of Aragon and to withstand the king in what he believes to be contrary to conscience. In spite of all threats from Henry and Norfolk, or touching entreaties from Marguerite, that resolution develops and strengthens in each succeeding act.

[14] Cf. Frères Parfaict, *Histoire du Théâtre François,* vol. VI, p. 150: "Il nous paroît superflu d'ajouter que cette piece est foible, le nom de l'Auteur en est une preuve sans réplique."

[15] Drap-Arnaud (Victor-Marc-Xavier) (1773-1833), born at Montpellier disliked military service and escaped to Spain. At Barcelona in 1808 he denounced those who were going to poison the flour used in the French garrison. After the second restoration he lived in studious retirement near Montpellier and came to Paris toward 1820 when he was pensioned by the government for his zeal and services. Some of his other tragedies are: *Louis le Débonnaire,* 1822; *Maxime, ou Rome livrée,* 1823; *La Clémence de David,* 1825.

[16] Published by Martinet, Paris, 1827, and dedicated to Madame la Duchesse de Berry.

Henry, though here shown fairly cruel and tyrannical, nevertheless at times evinces quite human feelings. At first he is apparently swayed by More's arguments, assuring him:

> Quand la vérité parle, un monarque l'écoute.
> Vos discours dans mon âme ont jeté quelque doute.
> (Act I, scene VII)

And even after the sovereign has decided on his course of action, he is loath to execute the plan, for he knows that killing More will cause an uprising among his subjects. Finally, his desire to make Anne Boleyn his wife so that he may have a legitimate male heir outweighs all other considerations. Henry reaches his decision at the end of Act III, after Norfolk has revealed to him his discovery of the Spanish plot. Henry orders his council to judge Thomas More, and from this point the play moves rapidly toward its dénouement, all subsequent meetings of More and his king having ever the same outcome. Before the hero passes to his execution he warns the magistrates to take a lesson from his fate:

> Redoutez la faveur, son éclat est funeste:
> La main qui m'éleva me conduit à la mort;
> Ministres du pouvoir, méditez sur mon sort.
> (Act V, scène dernière)

The martyr's rôle which Thomas More plays in all dramas concerning him is enhanced in this tragedy by his dissuading Henry's would-be assassin, an exalted idealist who feels called to exterminate tyranny, from his intended action. Drap-Arnaud's invention of the Spanish plot—for invention it is—forges the necessary link between Catherine of Aragon and Thomas More, giving the tragedy a unity of action which it could not otherwise possess.

The touching scene of Marguerite and her father, which both Puget de La Serre and Drap-Arnaud have given, has been expanded into a short play by Jacques d'Ars (pseudonym for Rohlfs de Sussex), entitled *Marguerite Morus,* "drame en trois actes avec musique," and published in 1912. In this drama we have a picture of the domestic life of Thomas More with his second wife, Lady Eston,[17] who is eager for worldly advance-

[17] Thomas More's second wife was named Alice Middleton, but she had a character similar to Lady Eston's. Unable to appreciate his

ment and rather jealous of her step-daughter's place in the chancellor's affections. Elisa Barton, the Holy Maid of Kent, is brought in to support Thomas More in his resignation from the chancellorship and to prophesy Henry VIII's further crimes. Many allusions are made to Henry, though he is not a character of the play. Marguerite, faithful companion to her father, and sharing particularly in his intellectual pursuits,[18] penetrates to his prison, but all her entreaties to make him save his life prove vain. He bids her farewell, telling her that, when she hears the bells stop ringing, she will know he is dead. The final curtain falls as the bells begin to toll.

As a companion-piece to *Marguerite Morus* we can consider the same author's *Thomas Morus,* in the prefatory notice of which the writer states:

Le caractère à la fois si fort et si doux de Thomas Morus, sa vie, son procès, sa fin tragique, tout cela pouvait donner matière au nouveau drame que nous présentons à notre sympathique public. Tout cela également comporte un enseignement précieux à une époque comme la nôtre où certains événements religieux et historiques du règne d'Henri VIII semblent se répéter dans notre pays.

Since the play bears no date, it is difficult to determine to what religious crisis the author alludes, but he probably means the general anti-clerical tendencies of the early twentieth century. He tells us that for historical facts he has based his play on the *Vie de Thomas Morus* (1832) by the princesse de Craon and on Audin's *Histoire de Henri VIII et du schisme d'Angleterre* (1847), both of which nineteenth-century works are written in a romantic manner, containing many particulars which sober criticism has long proved to be false. Audin affirms that Thomas More had a son John who used to come to await his father during the trial and confer with him after his exit from the audience-chamber.

conscientious scruples, she kept urging him, on her visits to his prison, to yield to the king's wishes so as to regain his freedom and social position.

[18] Cf. Père Hilarion de Coste, *Les Eloges et les Vies des Reynes, des Princesses et des Dames Illustres en Piété, en courage et en doctrine,* ed. 1647, vol. II, p. 402: "l'une des plus doctes femmes de l'Angleterre, qui parloit et écrivoit en perfection plusieurs Langues, particulierement la Romaine & la Grecque."

The first act, with its setting at Chelsea, More's country home, shows the hero's piety and belief in the efficacy of prayer. Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, is here introduced as an intimate friend of the chancellor. To them both comes Henry VIII with Thomas Cromwell, urging them to take the oath of supremacy, for "la conscience n'existe pas en face de la raison d'Etat" (Act I, scene III). Even the king's threat to implicate them in the suit of Elisa Barton, the Holy Maid of Kent, fails to intimidate them, and, without any regrets for the pomp he is leaving, Thomas More hands the chancellor's seal to his sovereign. In the second act we see the trial of Thomas More at the Court of Lambeth, where, in spite of moving speeches on the part of his friends, the hero is convicted. In Act III John, the young son, would have his father attempt an escape from his prison in the Tower of London, but Thomas More asks rather for help in his spiritual preparations to face the torture in store for him.[19] The king comes even to the prison-grating to make a last offer to More, but nothing can shake him from his faith. News of the courageous death of his old friend John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, helps him to face that scaffold which in a fourth tableau he mounts with unquavering step.[20] Catholic historians point out that Henry was punished for this act in the death of his son Edward VI on this same day, July 6, eighteen years later.

These two short plays by Jacques d'Ars have the flavor of religious propaganda, but are interesting in showing us the domestic life and the piety of Thomas More. They were clearly written to be produced by *pensionnaires* in a sectarian school rather than by a professional troupe.

Henry VIII in all the plays relating the divorce of Catherine of Aragon has appeared as a selfish, hyprocritical despot; he will appear no less so in the plays dealing with the disposal of

[19] Pollard, *op. cit.*, p. 331, gives Henry's political motives for the execution of More and Fisher.

[20] J. A. Froude, *The Divorce of Catherine of Aragon*, pp. 343-4: "His execution has been uniformly described as an act of wanton tyranny. It was not wanton, and it was not an act of tyranny. It was an inevitable and painful incident of an infinitely blessed revolution." Cf. Pollard, *op. cit.*, p. 334.

his second wife, Anne Boleyn. The first French drama to be produced on this subject was the *Henri VIII* of Marie-Joseph Chénier, composed and read before the Comédie Française prior to the Revolution, though not produced, because of trouble with the censors, until 1791.[21] It was the first production to be given at the new building of the Théâtre Français[22] in the rue de Richelieu. Although the great Talma, who had made the success of Chénier's preceding play, *Charles IX,* played the rôle of Henry VIII at its *première,* the tragedy met a cool audience, which became actively hostile during the fourth act, probably because of the cabale framed by a rival theater.[23] At the second performance a week later it was well received, and lived to enjoy as many as seventeen performances. Revived again in October, 1842, it met with no great success, sounding out of date beside the dramas of the romantic school or the "école de bon sens."

The revolutionist Chénier had a noble idea of the drama in thinking it should serve some great moral purpose, but unfortunately his propensity for moralizing led him to neglect dramatic technique, and *Henri VIII,* while it remains a great outburst against tyranny, will never survive as an artistic *chef-d'œuvre.* Realizing later that the character of Henry VIII was too rigid in its oppressive despotism, Chénier in subsequent revisions of the play modified certain scenes,[24] but succeeded only in rendering the whole tragedy more obscure.

The opening scene shows Henry VIII enamoured of Jane Seymour and therefore ready to rid himself of his second wife, Anne Boleyn:

> L'amour la fit régner; elle a cessé de plaire. (Act I, scene I)

The rival, Jane Seymour, realizing what a sinister fate the king's passion may prove to her, begs Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, to do his utmost to save Anne. Henry's wife is pictured as the innocent victim of his tyranny. The sovereign,

[21] Published by Moutard, Paris, 1793.

[22] Called at this time "le Théâtre de la République"; see A. Lieby, *Etude sur le Théâtre de Marie-Joseph Chénier,* Paris, 1901, p. 79.

[23] Lieby, *op. cit.,* pp. 80-81.

[24] Last scenes of Act III and Act V, scene I.

if he cannot dispose of her by fair means, does not shrink from stooping to foul, and, abetted by his follower Norfolk, who, although he is Anne's uncle, would commit any deed to continue in the monarch's favor, he frames a plot in which Anne will surely be convicted of adultery. Norfolk stealthily goes about securing against his niece evidence which several imprisoned courtiers, especially Norris, promise to furnish. But Norris, while promising one course of action, contemplates another, and at the trial amid the suspense of all the assembled courtiers he declares Anne innocent. It is a fine "coup de théâtre" and a bold speech from a prisoner:

> J'ai dit la vérité; je suis prêt à mourir.
> J'ai mérité mon sort; car j'ai pu te chérir.
> J'ai vu ramper ta Cour, et j'ai rampé moi-même.
> Je touche avec plaisir à ce moment suprême
> Où finit la puissance, où naît l'égalité,
> Où l'homme assujetti reprend sa liberté. (Act III, scene V)

Henry, ordering his torture and execution, breaks out angrily:

> Tromper, désobéir, s'élever contre moi!
> Les sujets sont toujours ennemis de leur Roi.
> Jusqu'à quand luttera leur insolent génie
> Contre un pouvoir suprême qu'ils nomment tyrannie!
> C'est de Dieu, de Dieu seul que je tiens ce pouvoir
> Commander est mon droit; servir est leur devoir.
> (Act III, scene VI)

Anne knows that her last hour is at hand; no pleas of Cranmer or Jane Seymour can save her. Henceforth all her thoughts center upon her child Elizabeth whom she commends to Jane, and upon that God who pities the oppressed. La Harpe in his *Correspondance littéraire* of 1791 noted that in spite of Anne's being aided by Jane Seymour and the Archbishop of Canterbury, the implacable cruelty and tyrannical passion of Henry VIII made the victim's fate certain from the outset. Even Henry's remorse we know to be mere hypocrisy, for, when in the final act he seems to be moved by pleas for pity and sends an order to suspend the execution, we are aware that he has previously given Norfolk private orders to hasten that event. In later editions of the play, Henry's orders to Norfolk in Act V, scene I, are replaced by a monologue of Henry, in which he seems to waver in his decision and be on the point of granting

pardon. But as Lieby points out, such remorse jars too harshly with the imperious nature we have constantly seen in Henry heretofore:

Ces retouches mal fondues avec le premier dessin du personnage ont laissé quelque indécision sur l'ensemble de ce rôle de Henri VIII.[25]

Chénier makes no use at all of the element of jealous love. Jane Seymour in the position of rival to Anne Boleyn plays rather the rôle of ally in pleading for the disgraced queen and in receiving the charge of her child. Anne shows no envy of Jane's position, and makes only one appeal to Henry's affection; finding it leaves him unmoved, she makes no second attempt.

Nor does Chénier concern himself with atmosphere. The presence of the three-year-old Elizabeth, frightened at her mother's gloomy speeches when she is taken to visit her in the Tower, and later bewailing her mother's absence, lends a slight amount of color, but on the whole Chénier is not interested in the picturesque. History in itself has no attraction for him; only an historical fact possessing elements for a moral lesson is a subject worthy of his "théâtre épuré."

Atmosphere for this subject was to come later in *Anne de Boulen,* the three-act *mélodrame* of Dupetit-Méré and Ballisan de Rougemont,[26] first produced at the Théâtre de l'Ambigu-Comique, May 8, 1821, and published the same year by Quoy. But, as is usual in melodramas, local color replaces all historical verity. The setting announces the date 1536—the year of Anne Boleyn's execution, but we soon perceive Anne's daughter Elizabeth, aged at least thirteen, taking a very important rôle, acting as intercessor between her father and mother as Jane Seymour had done in Chénier's tragedy. Jane Seymour does not appear at all, though several allusions are made to Henry's passion for her.

In the opening scene, from the servants' hushed voices and preoccupied air we get an impression of imminent peril. They observe that all the destruction prepared formerly for Catherine of Aragon is preparing now for their mistress Anne. Since the death of her infant son, Anne has fallen from favor; even her brother Arthur, angry at her refusal to marry Norris, has aban-

[25] Lieby, *op. cit.*, p. 464.

[26] Signed MM. Frédéric et * * * .

doned her. She is living in close retirement at her castle of Felton, cut off from all social intercourse and awaiting Henry's decision in her case. Elizabeth effects an entrance into her place of seclusion, overcoming the guards with her superior air.[27] The peasants and servants, wishing to hearten their mistress, have planned a festival to commemorate her coronation in June, 1523.[28] Her friend Norris, too, comes to her aid, attempting a reconciliation between brother and sister, but the king arrives most inopportunely in the midst of such proposals. Henry has decided that Anne must demand a separation. Anne, however, learning that he does not plan to recognize Elizabeth as his successor, vows she will keep the crown on her head as long as possible to preserve it for her daughter. Henry as usual breaks out stormily at being opposed in the slightest measure. In the second act, Anne is brought to trial at Westminster and, as in Chénier's tragedy, proclaimed innocent by Norris. Her brother Arthur, hearing from her lips that she is innocent, swears to be her avenger. This news drives Henry into signing her death-warrant. In the ensuing revolt Jane Seymour is seized as a hostage and Elizabeth takes an active part in her mother's cause. But soon Arthur is captured, Lady Seymour is won back, and Henry revels in his vengeance.

The character of the young Elizabeth, though entirely unhistorical in this situation, is an interesting foreshadowing of the monarch she will grow to be, respected by her subjects who heed her tone of authority. Henry proves as tyrannical as ever and more perfidious. Norfolk does not figure in this drama, for his rôle as king's factotum is filled by Albergenny (Abergavenny). Cranmer again is portrayed as the cleric sympathetic to Anne,[29] exhorting the king to have more moderation in his passion, and warning Henry that all posterity will despise him for his despotism.

The same theme appeared some years later[30] in the French

[27] "Malgré son extrême jeunesse Elisabeth montre déjà un grand caractère." (Act I, scene II)

[28] Ten years prior to the historical date.

[29] History does not picture him so; cf. Pollard, *op. cit.*, p. 344.

[30] In 1835. An anonymous translation of the same work had been made in 1831.

translation which Castil-Blaze made of Romani's libretto for the Italian opera *Anna Bolena*.[31] Here, not Norris, but Lord Percy, is represented as Anne's former lover, Jane Seymour standing again in a sympathetic relation to Anne. Alfred,[32] Anne's young page trapped by Henry at the trial, is responsible for his mistress' conviction, and all accomplices suffer the death-penalty.

All the foregoing plays have made Anne Boleyn wholly innocent, a fact which several historians question.[33] An eighteenth-century drama of the Comte Guibert shows her guilty of an unlawful passion for her brother. The play was written as early as 1777, but not published until after Guibert's death.[34] A reading of his plays convinces one that, while the count may have been a military genius, he had not the talent of a dramatic author; his undying fame will rest on his *Essai de Tactique* rather than on *Anne de Boleyn, les Gracches,* or *Le Connétable de Bourbon.* Madame de Staël, however, in her *Eloge de Guibert,*[35] written just after the count's death, waxes enthusiastic over the tragedy:

Elle est tout entière consacrée à l'amour; il me semble que sous ce rapport elle tient le même rang parmi les tragédies que *La Nouvelle Héloise* parmi les romans. C'est la passion criminelle peinte sur le théâtre: on peut à cet égard condamner Monsieur Guibert; mais, comme il ne fait paraître Anne de Boulen et son coupable frère qu'au moment de leur repentir et de leur punition, il est permis de dire que, voulant montrer l'amour dans toute sa violence, il a rassemblé toutes les fautes que cette passion peut faire commettre, mais qui, ne venant que d'elle, et ne retombant que sur soi font naître encore l'intérêt et la pitié. Ah! que cette pièce émeut profondément, alors qu'au Ve acte Anne de Boulen et son frère Rochefort sont prêts à perdre la vie! Anne veut ramener son frère à cette religion dont les sublimes secours la consolent et la fortifient. L'incrédulité de son frère repousse tous ses arguments; près de perdre sa dernière espérance, elle ose invoquer un amour coupable; elle ose interroger le cœur de son amant: "Quoi! lui dit-elle, renonceras-tu pour jamais à l'espoir qui nous reste de nous revoir un

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[31] Music by Donizetti.

[32] Mark Smeaton, Anne's music-master, was the only one of her alleged accomplices to plead guilty.

[33] Cf. Pollard, *op. cit.*, p. 345.

[34] His works were published by his widow; Paris, Persan & Cie., 1822.

[35] *Œuvres Complètes*, Firmin-Didot, ed. 1844, vol. III, p. 417.

jour?" A ces mots son frère tombe à genoux et s'écrie: "Je crois en Dieu!" Quelle tragédie contient un mouvement plus énergique et plus tendre! que de sentiments exprimés à la fois; que d'âmes converties avec celle de Rochefort!

Surely an audience would have found in the play only a revolting situation and a reader finds it no less so.

The play is a strange mixture of events: Anne has evidently been married for some time to Henry, since their child Elizabeth is three years old. Yet Henry has ordered Rochefort home for the ceremony of Anne's coronation, which, according to history, took place more than three years previously. Then, Henry's suspicions awakened concerning Anne [36] and her brother, he decides that the coronation shall be turned into an execution.

The fact of Anne's illicit intercourse with her brother George Boleyn has never been proven, though the historian Sanders in his *De Origine ac progressu schismatis anglicani* [37] asserts that Anne, anxious to have a male heir and realizing that she could not have another child by Henry, cohabited with her brother George, hoping thus to keep the matter more secret than if she should have intercourse with other men. Other Catholic historians, Blackwood, Florimond de Rémond, Girolamo Pollini, and Giulio Rosso, follow Sanders in this tale as well as in that scandal concerning Anne's birth—that she herself was Henry's natural daughter—since Henry in his youth had taken her mother, Thomas Boleyn's wife, as his mistress, and Anne had been the fruit of their amours. The modern historian Pollard characterizes such stories as mere fables.[38]

In Guibert's play the character of Henry VIII offers a striking contrast to Chénier's symbol of the Tyrant. Madame Guibert,[39] it is true, saw in her husband's tragedy "le caractère despotique de Henri VIII et la piété courageuse d'Anne de Boulen," but the jealous man with strong grounds for his suspicions is here much more evident than the tyrant exulting in his oppressive authority.

[36] An Italian play *Anna Bolena* by Archidiacono Savaro de Mileto, Roma, 1667, shows Anne guilty of adultery.

[37] P. 88 of the French translation, edition of 1587.

[38] *Op. cit.*, p. 188, note 1.

[39] In the preface to her edition of the Comte de Guibert's works.

In another play concerning Henry's marriages entitled *Deux Reines,* a work of Eugénie Casanova published in 1867, we see in the first act the divorce of Catherine of Aragon and the rising supremacy of Anne Boleyn, followed in the the ensuing acts by the fall of Anne herself into the abyss of royal disfavor. Of all the plays dealing with Henry's first divorce, this is the only one in which Cardinal Wolsey figures. All other plays deal with a period subsequent to the time of the astute diplomatist's fall from power in October 1529. He appears here as Catherine's consoler, assuring her that Henry will never break with the Pope.[40]

Madame Casanova makes Anne Boleyn the central character of the drama, showing us in seven tableaux the various periods of her life—her courtship, her coronation, her trial and execution. Early in Act I we hear of her dream, in which she has had a premonition of becoming England's queen, but her nurse Neltz that same night has dreamt of her destruction. In the further scenes of this act we see the monarch paying suit to his new love, and, in contrast to this idyl, poor Catherine, solitary in her palace, brooding over the king's desertion and growing steadily more certain of her coming repudiation. Act II shows us Anne at the height of her ambition crowned Queen of England. But such triumph is soon followed by disillusion, a feeling of constraint at court ceremony, and finally, in the last act, disgrace. The main defect of the play is its lack of characterization. Especially after the first act many of the historical events are detailed by the villagers, Laure, Betly, Neltz, and by the merchants, instead of by the main characters responsible for those events. In Act II it is the merchants who tell the audience of Anne's coronation, of Catherine's illness and death; it is the pages who gossip of Henry's new attachment. With so many scenes thus consumed we get no clear picture of the protagonists. Catherine is not seen enough to justify the title *Deux Reines,* and after finishing the play one wonders just what the author intended to portray.

A five-act melodrama of Eugène Fillion and L. Jousserandot entitled *Lord Surrey* (1838) [41] supposedly gives a picture of the

[40] He does not have this rôle in history.

[41] Performed for the first time at the Gaîté, May 17, 1838; printed in the *Théâtre Moderne.*

events in 1536 and 1537, with the famous poet, Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey,[42] playing the rôle of hero, and Edward Clinton that of villain—both quite unhistorically. Although Henry VIII has no part in the play, the allusions made to him and to his reign deserve notice. In the opening scene Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Richmond,[43] who appears only as Surrey's intimate friend and receives no mention in the play as Henry VIII's natural son, speaks thus against his sovereign for the execution of Anne Boleyn:

Infamie! mille fois infamie sur celui qui accuse et sur ceux qui condamnent—Henry VIII, qui nous gouverne, avec un siège d'inquisiteur pour trône et une hache pour sceptre, doit épouvanter les nobles et le peuple, les plus dignes et les plus braves—Anne de Boulen—la vertu d'une sainte, la pureté d'un ange, la beauté d'une vierge, est traîtreusement décapitée dans la Tour de Londres, pour un prétendu crime d'adultère. (Act I, scene I)

In a soliloquy Richmond later apostrophizes Surrey, the eighteen-year-old favorite of the king:

Mais redoute quand le roi t'embrasse au front en t'appelant son favori: ton protecteur est ombrageux, il renverse qui tend à s'élever—redoute surtout qu'il se souvienne un jour que tu es resté catholique, et que, dans un caprice de réforme ta religion n'abatte ta tête.
(Act I, scene IV)

Surrey in his agony apostrophizes his king:

Henri, Henri—pitié! pitié! Mais je suis en démence, mon Dieu, car j'oublie que le cœur d'Henri VIII n'a jamais su pardonner même à un innocent. (Act IV, scene X)

And when it is suggested that Henry may be softened, the retort comes:

Le tigre devenir l'agneau! Allons donc, c'est impossible: Luther se ferait plutôt pape. (Act V, scene II)

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[42] Surrey (1517?-1547) was beheaded for treason. Thomas Nashe in his *Unfortunate Traveller, or Adventures of Jack Wilton* (1594) tells the romantic story of Surrey's love for Geraldine, daughter of the Earl of Kildare. He travelled to Italy where the magician Cornelius Agrippa showed the poet her face in a magic mirror; the story, although pure fiction, has been used in large part by these dramatists.

[43] Henry Fitzroy (1519-1536), natural son of Henry VIII by Elizabeth Blount. He married his friend Surrey's sister Mary. The poet celebrated their friendship in his verses.

From these quotations one gets a clear impression that their authors have done nothing to alleviate the adverse picture of Henry VIII found generally in French literature.

Dramatists are not attracted to the quiet years of Henry's reign—his satisfactory union with Jane Seymour, which gave him that ineffable boon of a male heir, or his brief alliance with the unprepossessing Anne of Cleves, whom his convenient conscience soon found a means of divorcing. Henry's fifth bride was to be the vivacious Catherine Howard, niece of the Duke of Norfolk as Anne Boleyn had been, and destined to suffer the same fate as her ambitious cousin. Catherine, whose father was a penurious noble, had received a very bad education, having been brought up by the old Duchess Dowager of Norfolk, in whose household the young girl did much as she pleased, holding secret rendezvous with a page of her uncle's suite named Francis Dereham, with her music-master Henry Mannock, or with her cousin Thomas Culpepper. Catherine became a prominent figure in national politics when Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester and leader of the Catholic party, presented her to Henry, trying to offset the work of Thomas Cromwell and the Protestants, who had forwarded the marriage with Anne of Cleves and a German Lutheran alliance. Henry married Catherine in 1540 and the following year set out with her upon a progress to the North, where she began to have stolen interviews with her former lovers. News of her incontinence reached the ears of Archbishop Cranmer, who felt in duty bound to relay it to the king; forthwith the pretty Catherine, whom Henry had considered a paragon of virtue as well as beauty, was confronted by judges who convicted her of guilty life previous to her marriage with the king, and sent her to the block, February 13, 1542.

In this episode was good material for the historical drama of the romantic period, and Alexandre Dumas père put it to good use in his *Catherine Howard.*[44] He does well in his *avertissement* to call it "un drame extra-historique," in which, as he says, "Henri VIII n'a été pour moi qu'un clou auquel j'ai

[44] "Drame en 5 actes et 8 tableaux;" played first at the Théâtre de la Porte-Saint-Martin, June 2, 1834.

attaché mon tableau." An analysis of the drama shows its wide departure from historical fact. Henry VIII in the first tableau is shown as an absolutist and as an unfortunate husband. He tells Ethelwood, Duke of Dierham, that his last affair with Anne of Cleves has made him want to drown his cares in visits to the beautiful Catherine Howard, to whom Fleming, his old alchemist, has just introduced him. He has already visited her, disguised as a courtier, and he now urges Ethelwood to bring the fair girl to court, for he intends to marry her. Ethelwood, astounded at such news, because he himself is already secretly married to Catherine, decides he must take strong measures to preserve his happiness. Seeking out the alchemist Fleming, he bids him prepare a potion which will put Catherine into a long sleep, so that to all she will appear as dead; then he will extricate her from her tomb and carry her off to a hidden corner of the world, where no one shall learn of their existence.

Catherine, a young girl brought up in solitude by only her nurse, Kennedy, has longings for social splendor, and Ethelwood, entering her secluded dwelling, finds her singing the ballad of la Belle Elfride, the vassal who became queen. The potion is administered, Catherine appears dead, and lies in state at Dierham Castle, where the enamoured Henry comes to say a last farewell and place a ring on her finger in sign of his wish to have been united with her. While Ethelwood is out taking leave of the king, Catherine wakens from her long slumber, frightened by her gruesome surroundings, but soon quieted by the returning Ethelwood, who tells her of the monarch's love for her, and how he has given her the potion so as to keep her affection for himself. News of the king's love awakens in the ambitious girl all her repressed longings, her desires for dazzling court-life and a marriage with royalty. She secures from Ethelwood the promise that he will not take her away from England, and, in spite of her husband's remonstrances, she continues to wear the engagement ring Henry has put on her finger.

The King now arrives at Dierham Castle with news of Ethelwood's appointment to an important post in the army and an offer of marriage with his sister the Princess Marguerite. Much to the King's annoyance, Ethelwood declines the marriage pro-

posal and after the monarch's departure informs Catherine he has drunk some of the same potion he has formerly administered to her. He too shall become dead to the rest of the world, to live only for her. Since he has no friends, no relatives, only she shall know his secret and come to liberate him from his tomb. One key he gives to Catherine that she may come and free him; the other he sends to the king as his heir.

The king's visit has filled Catherine with a consuming desire for widowhood. Her husband's temporary stupor affords her the longed-for opportunity to present herself at court, where Henry, enraptured to find that she still lives, makes immediate promise that she shall become his queen. Such full realization of all her old dreams proves too great a temptation to the ambitious girl, and, stopping her ears to all cries of her conscience, she silently drops the key to Ethelwood's tomb into the river.

But meanwhile, the Princess Marguerite, to whom Henry has given the duplicate key, liberates Ethelwood from his tomb. He appears before his guilty wife to tell her he will vanish so that she may become queen of England, but she will live to suffer the fate of Anne Boleyn.

Catherine as queen cannot enjoy her glittering luxury; instead of loving the king, she fears him, and her greatest terror is lest in her troubled sleep she reveal her crime. As she broods over her guilt, Ethelwood again appears before her to relate the sequel of the story of la Belle Elfride, who forgot to tell King Robert of her previous liaison with Richard. Richard sought vengeance. While Ethelwood is still conversing with Catherine, Henry returns from council, and, hearing voices behind locked doors, demands immediate admittance, which is denied him. In his fury he orders the door battered down, but by the time he gains access to the room the visitor has departed. In his haste, however, Ethelwood has left his toque, the ownership of which Catherine refuses to reveal to Henry. The jealous husband with all his suspicions aroused leads Catherine before her judges, who condemn her to die with her accomplices, whoever they may be, within three days.

The Count of Sussex offers himself to Catherine as her champion and is challenged by a masked knight, who declares Catherine has had a lover before Henry VIII. The imprisoned woman soon learns that the masked knight has killed her cham-

pion Sussex in single combat and that all is preparing for her execution. Making use for a last time of her wiles, she bribes the executioner to leave London, hoping to soften the king's heart before another can be summoned from Calais. Henry, when he learns that the executioner has disappeared, offers a large sum to anyone who will act as a substitute. The masked knight presents himself and, after performing his frightful deed, denounces himself as Catherine's accomplice.

The play runs the gamut of melodramatic devices—unexpected arrivals, disguises, potions, sepulchres and fatal keys. Parigot[45] has already pointed out the obvious resemblances to famous dramas—the potion reminds one of *Romeo and Juliette,* the toque left by Ethelwood is Desdemona's handkerchief, Catherine admiring her jewels[46] is Marguerite in *Faust,* the judgment of God in the trial by combat is from *Ivanhoe.* The same critic sees the influence of *Catherine Howard* on Victor Hugo's *Angelo,* as the drama *La Tour de Nesle* of Dumas had formerly influenced Victor Hugo's *Lucrèce Borgia:*

Après avoir transplanté la Tour de Nesle en Italie il était aisé à Victor Hugo de transplanter la Tour de Londres à Venise. Sans doute la Préface d'*Angelo* a débordé jusqu'à trois fois à travers l'œuvre; mais enlevez les sermons qui sont pièces de rapports, restent le sujet et le dessin général de *Catherine Howard,* à défaut de l'exécution dramatique: le manteau de Rodolpho trahit Catarina comme la toque d'Ethelwood dénonce Catherine; le roi Henri et le podestat sont deux sires de Barbe-Bleue; Homodéi joue une partie du rôle d'Ethelwood; et pour les narcotiques nous savons que Roméo les a fournis. Victor Hugo ouvre et ferme sa pièce avec une 'clef fatale'; Dumas, toujours prodigue, en a deux.[47]

But these are after all the mere externals. On close reading of both plays one finds the main themes quite unlike: Catherine Howard's vaulting ambition which balks at no means for its realization has no counterpart in *Angelo;* Ethelwood's rôle of wronged lover seeking vengeance, because of its unity, is much stronger than Homodéi's which combines that of spy with rejected suitor; Angelo himself is only the jealous husband, not also the absolutist.[48]

[45] Hippolyte Parigot, *Le Drame d'Alexandre Dumas,* Paris, Calmann Lévy, 1898. [46] Act I, tableau II, scene II. [47] *Op. cit.,* p. 145.

[48] Henry VIII to the Scotch leaders, Act I, tableau I, scene III: "Le

From Dumas' *Mémoires*[49] we get the story of the play's evolution; the author had seen a painting by Horace Vernet entitled *Edith aux longs cheveux cherchant le corps d'Harold sur le champ de bataille d'Hastings.* The title, not the painting, seized the imagination of the dramatist; *Edith aux longs cheveux* would make a splendid title for a drama. So Dumas set to work writing a play in verse: Edith, a beautiful girl with a heart of marble should represent cold ambition—and he wrote the same story which we find later in *Catherine Howard* up to the point of Catherine's dropping the key of Ethelwood's tomb into the river. But a reading of the drama before the Comédie Française convinced the author that his play would leave the audience cold. Mademoiselle Mars suggested to him that the drama was not complete. What became of Ethelwood in the tomb? What became of Edith after her marriage to the king? Could not the king's sister serve in the plot by becoming a foil to Edith's ambition? Dumas had a flash of inspiration and decided to write the story of *Catherine Howard.*

Although this drama of Dumas is not his best work, it well represents the type of pseudo-historical drama popular in the 1830's. To have a general historical background sufficed for the depiction of some grim terror or act of vengeance. Here the names of Henry VIII, Catherine Howard, and Dierham suffice for that background, leaving the author to follow his poetic fancy.

A *scène lyrique* has been developed from the story of Catherine Howard by Edmond Delière, pubilshed at Saint-Quentin in 1878.[50] The vengeful Ethelwood becomes here Gilbert, "officier de fortune," who, though cruelly treated by Catherine, still loves her. Henry interrupts them in a love-scene and, having his suspicions now confirmed, orders them both executed. The production has no important literary value, serving simply as the libretto for a one-act opera.

The fact that Henry had three wives named Catherine sug-

peuple d'Ecosse doit hommage à sa noblesse, la noblesse d'Ecosse à son roi, le roi d'Ecosse au roi d'Angleterre, et le roi d'Angleterre à Dieu."

[49] *Mes Mémoires,* 2 vols. in f., 1866, Poissy, Imprimerie de A. Bouret, vol. II, pp. 351-354.

[50] It received "premier prix avec médaille d'or du concours de cantates de 1877, institué par la Société académique de Saint-Quentin."

gested to Paul Duport and Edouard Monnais the idea of writing a play called *Les Trois Catherine,* which should give historical scenes from the reign of Henry VIII in three epochs. The play was accompanied with music composed by Adolphe Adam and Casimir Gide and was first produced at the Théâtre des Nouveautés, November 18, 1830.[51] In the *avertissement* the authors explain why the play is now published separately from the music:

En effet, le drame avait été composé tel que nous l'offrons au public, et n'était pas destiné à recevoir de musique nouvelle. . . Nous avons voulu produire sur le théâtre un tableau historique, d'une fidélité rigoureusement complète, et peindre sans adoucissement, dans les faits, les mœurs, et le langage, un roi et une cour tels que nous les avaient montrés les recherches les plus exactes et les plus patientes.

Duport and Monnais at least do more than other writers have done in showing Henry VIII in his complete character—as a lover of music, a writer on theological subjects, an amateur of Greek studies, as well as a stern despot. The first act is a picture of events in the year 1533 at the moment when Henry obtained his divorce. Thomas More again appears as the man of conscience to whom Henry expostulates:

Ah! vous avez une conscience, Monsieur Thomas Morus—vous êtes bien hardi!—rentrez dans la poussière—courbez-vous, courbez cette tête, ou je la ferai tomber. (Act I, scene III)

Anne Boleyn is alluded to as the captivating woman who has bewitched the king, but she does not appear, since this is a play concerning the Catherines. In order to give a certain unity to the entire work Catherine Howard and Catherine Parr (who was later to be Henry's sixth wife) are introduced in the first act as ladies-in-waiting at court. Catherine Howard is in the midst of her flirtation with George Derham and Catherine Parr is about to be wedded to Lord Latimer. Catherine of Aragon as usual occupies very little of our attention, appearing in only a few scenes, and refusing with her customary impassivity Henry's demands for a divorce.

Act II gives us a scene in 1542 with Catherine Howard as queen. George Derham, returning from his trip to America,

[51] Published the same year by Barba.

receives the shocking news of Anne Boleyn's execution, Jane Seymour's death, Anne of Cleves' divorce, and Catherine Howard's marriage. Catherine is much disturbed at Derham's reappearance, and, seeking out her old uncle, the Duke of Norfolk, begs him to secure from Derham the love-letters she has formerly written him. Norfolk by his blundering questions about infidelity arouses the king's suspicions, which are more fully confirmed by the mark of the queen's favor to Derham. Catherine fearlessly avows to the monarch her decided preference for her first love, and goes off to her execution while Catherine Parr Latimer, the widow on whom Henry has recently been casting his eyes, becomes Queen of England.

Act III shows us the court in 1547, the year of Henry's death. Paralyzed and ill so that he can no longer think of love, politics, or intrigues, he occupies his entire thoughts with religious questions:

> Plus il s'approche de sa fin, plus il cherche à se racheter devant Dieu, et c'est en tyrannisant la conscience de ses sujets qu'il compte expier ce que lui reproche la sienne. Tâchez qu'il ne vous croie pas catholique, et encore moins protestant. . . La potence attend celui qui tient pour Rome, et le bûcher qui tient contre elle.[52] (Act III, scene II)

His wife, Catherine Parr, has become implicated in the religious reforms, and, in his fury at being crossed in his opinion, Henry is about to sign her death-warrant. The cringing Norfolk, who has allowed two of his nieces to go to their death because he thought that in so doing he was gaining the king's favor and advancing his prospects of becoming chancellor, now has the same hope of ingratiating himself with the king by producing the sentence against Catherine Parr. But Henry and Catherine have meanwhile become reconciled, and Henry, raging at the old courtier, orders his arrest:

> Va-t'en, vil duc et pair, président absurde, stupidité revêtue d'hermine.[53] (Act III, scene IX)

The suspicious monarch then thinks Catherine has perhaps made only a pretense of reconciliation in order to save her life,

[52] Allusions to the religious difficulties of the period; cf. James Gairdner in D. N. B., vol. 26, p. 92.

[53] The story is told of chancellor Wriothesley; see Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, edition Townsend, London, 1838, vol. V, p. 560.

because she hopes ultimately to be united with her lover, Seymour. He therefore decides once more on the death of the queen and many courtiers, but fortunately death overtakes him and stops his fury.

It was a difficult matter to give any kind of unity to a play covering so vast a period, but the authors achieved it by introducing all the characters in the first episode of 1533. In doing so they violated history, but they made a much more perfect dramatic production. They give a quite satisfactory background for the court also in their description of a court-revel which will have "un mystère du poète Wyat, une moralité en style macaronique par Skelton, et un divertissement nommé entremets par le petit Surrey" (Act I, scene VIII).

The picture of Henry's sixth wife is quite close to the one history has given us—a sweet woman, kind to the suffering, and although well-educated, having the wisdom to bow before her husband's will in ecclesiastical matters, humbly admitting that it would be unbecoming in her to assert opinions contrary to those of her lord. Her unhappy life is shown in her enforced marriage to Lord Latimer in Act I, when her real love was for Thomas Seymour, in Act II her marriage to the king, involving once more the sacrifice of her own wishes to her sovereign's command; but at the end of the third act we see her at last free to marry the man she has long loved.

In none of the foregoing plays has Henry VIII appeared as a lewd, brutish creature of ungovernable passion. Selfish and tyrannical he has been shown to have been, passionate and headstrong we know he was, inconstant and unfaithful sometimes to Catherine of Aragon[54] and later to Anne Boleyn, but surely never the vile lecher that the writer Jean Rouxel has portrayed in his five-act drama entitled *Toute Faute s'expie.*[55] The author deserves no commendation for the lurid melodrama he has concocted with supposedly historical characters, whose authenticity does not go beyond their names. The plot runs briefly as follows:

[54] He had had a son, Henry Fitzroy, by Elizabeth Blount, one of the women at court, in 1519; Anne Boleyn's elder sister Mary had had a liaison with him before he became attached to Anne.

[55] Published in Paris, by Léon Vanier, 1908.

One of Henry VIII's courtiers, the Earl of Rutland, aged fifty, is bringing up his beautiful sixteen-year-old ward Edith in a secluded tower so as to enjoy her himself. The fair girl is seen by King Henry, who immediately becomes enamoured of her and frightens her with his libidinous glances. Rutland, seeing that he must preclude the king's intent by prior action, reveals to Edith that he is not her father, but that he loves her with a much more intense passion, all of which terrifies the poor child, who longs to escape from her prison. Rutland's young son Herbert, coming to the tower on another errand, sees Edith for the first time. As it is a case of mutual love at first sight, Edith begs the young man to save her. That night, when Rutland comes masked to carry Edith off, Herbert arrives opportunely, kills the assaulter, and then finds it is his own father. He is therefore imprisoned as a parricide. His mother, Lady Jane, in order to deliver him, decides to divulge the shameful secret of her life—that Herbert is the son, not of Rutland, but of Viscount Towton. She wishes to go to the king to reveal her sin, so that Herbert may be freed. But Edith knows she too can save Herbert by yielding to the king's wishes, so, anticipating the mother's sacrifice, she leaves for the palace. She is about to deliver herself to the king's lustful grasp when Herbert, having seized upon the first means of breaking from prison, again rushes to the rescue. The infuriated Henry delivers Herbert over to justice and in the last act all preparation is being made for his execution at Tyburn. Lady Jane, who has resolved to make a full confession of her life in the hope of saving her son, has gone to the king with a coffer containing precious papers concerning Herbert's birth in order to open it in Henry's presence, but, on opening it, she finds that the papers have been removed. Nothing now can save her child. At the sound of the fatal blow she too falls dead.

The author states that the play is a picture of 1540, but at that date he makes Henry thirty-one years of age—and Henry was born in 1491. The king appears as an oppressive monarch [56]

[56] Herbert lays serious charges against his rule:

Par la terreur il règne!
Sous son sceptre de fer partout le pays saigne;
Ses honteux vices seuls le font changer de foi;

and as a base creature of animal lusts—"le roi bas, vénal, lubrique." Herbert discloses that

Près de son lit souillé c'est un billot qu'on trouve. (Act III, scene IV)

The play lacks all historical background and verity. The Earl of Rutland has never been found to have this gory tale attached to his reputation and Henry, though admittedly a despot, was never this depraved wretch.

The portrait of Henry VIII is only partially painted in French drama. All authors have pictured him an absolutist, most have shown him cruel, but few have pointed out that dangerous conscience with which he armed himself to secure his first divorce, to burn heretics, or to operate his ecclesiastical reforms. None have shown him to be what Pollard calls him—the most remarkable man who ever sat on the English throne:

He ruled in a ruthless age with a ruthless hand, he dealt with a violent crisis by methods of blood and iron, and his measures were crowned with whatever sanction wordly success can give. He is Machiavelli's "Prince" in action.[57]

Quite surprisingly no nineteenth-century author has made any close adaptation of Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*, which shows the consummate statesmanship of Cardinal Wolsey and the glory of Queen Elizabeth's birth. The French plays show rather a leaning toward the Catholic attitude in picturing the heroic death of Thomas More, the pitiful end of Anne Boleyn, and later of Catherine Howard, victims of an uncompromising tyrant. The characterizations of the monarch follow quite closely that of Nicholas Sanders,[58] who wrote of Henry VIII:

Il se precipitoit presque dedans tous les gouffres des vices & mechancetez, & pardessus toutes autres estoit accablé principalement de trois, de paillardise, d'avarice, & de cruauté.

Le plaisir est son Dieu, son caprice la loi;
Devant lui tout fléchit, l'Eglise et la Justice.
Le cœur se racornit, l'âme se rapetisse. (Act IV, scene VI.)

[57] Pollard, *op. cit.*, p. 440.

[58] *Op. cit.*, p. 128.

CHAPTER IV

Mary Tudor

The death of Henry VIII in 1547 brought to the throne the young boy Edward VI, whose reign was to be brief and fairly uneventful, at least not abounding in the spectacular incidents which attract dramatists. The work of religious reform progressed steadily and quietly throughout his short rule, more or less unaided by the sickly monarch. Edward's death, rather than his life, proved the circumstance to afford most excitement to his kingdom and subsequently to offer the requisite material to dramatic authors.

Edward's chief adviser, the ambitious John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, whose rôle had become constantly more puissant as he rose in political position from simple member of the council to that of Protector, after the disposal of his rival, Somerset, contrived the scheme of perpetuating his power by altering the act of royal succession. By natural right the throne would have passed to Mary Tudor, but Northumberland, realizing that at her accession his dominion would cease, conceived a different plan: by marrying his son Guilford to Lady Jane Grey, grand-niece of Henry VIII,[1] and by persuading the king to make a will naming his cousin, Lady Jane, his heir, he hoped to continue his control of the state. Accordingly, in the spring of 1553, when the young king's health was ebbing, he influenced the sovereign to sign a will to that effect, bringing to bear the fact that Jane, favorable to the religious reform, would continue that work, whereas Mary, upon her accession, would immediately arouse a catholic reaction. Edward VI passed away on July 6th. Although the rumor spread that the Duke had hastened his end by poison,[2] the report has received no corroboration. North-

[1] Henry VIII's younger sister Mary, after the death of her first husband, Louis XII of France, had become the wife of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk; their daughter Frances Brandon married Henry Grey, Marquis of Dorset, and Jane was the eldest of the three daughters of this marriage.

[2] All the historians give the fact simply as rumor: cf. Florimond de

umberland summoned the council, made known Edward's will of June 21st, and Lady Jane Grey was proclaimed queen July 10th. But the council, though outwardly in unanimous agreement, contained members hostile to Northumberland and favoring Mary. Among these, the Earl of Arundel secretly notified Mary of her brother's death and of the Duke's conspiracy. She gathered an army of 30,000 men, marched toward London, and was proclaimed Queen of England. Northumberland, who had marched against her, was seized at Oxford, and Lady Jane Grey's sovereignty thus came to a sudden end. Northumberland was executed August 20th and his son Guilford, with Lady Jane, remained imprisoned in the Tower. Their execution came the following February as a result of the Thomas Wyatt rebellion, a patriotic manifestation against Mary's proposed foreign marriage with Philip of Spain.

Several playwrights have used this plot of Northumberland as a subject for drama. Toward the middle of the seventeenth century La Calprenède[3] made use of it in his *Ieanne Reyne d'Angleterre* (1638).[4] The play was published evidently in the author's absence, causing strained relations between author and publisher, as one can gather from reading La Calprenède's preface to a later play, *Le Comte d'Essex* (1639):

Rémond, *La Naissance de l'hérésie*, Arras, 1611, p. 1004: "quelques-uns asseurent qu'il fut empoisonné avec un clistere." ; Hilarion de Coste, *Eloges et Vies des Reines, Princesses et Dames Illustres*, Paris, Cramoisy, 1647, p. 538: "le Roy Edouard deceda non sans soupçon d'avoir esté empoisonné par le Duc de Northumberland." ; Michelangelo Florio, *Historia de la Vita e de la Morte de l'Illustrissima Signora Giovanna Graia*, Firenze, 1607, p. 29: "Dopo la morte di quel santo Re Edouardo VI à l'età nostra Josia novello, per opra (si come vien detto per publico grido) di Giovanni Dudeleio, Duca di Nortamberlante."

[3] Gautier de Coste de la Calprenède (1610-1663) was born near Sarlat (Dordogne) and educated in Toulouse. In early manhood he came to Paris, where he became courtier and author, though he tried to belittle the latter pursuit. His first play, *La Mort de Mithridate*, published in 1637, was followed by several other dramatic productions, before the author began his famous novels: *Cassandre* (1642-45); *La Cléopâtre* (1647); *Faramond*.

[4] Published by Sommaville in 1638. The date of *privilège* is Feb. 7, 1637, the same as that of *Bradamante*, and *La Clarionte*, his two preceding plays. No "achevé d'imprimer" date is given. The play was dedicated by the publisher to the Abbé d'Armentière, who later became Duc de Guise.

Pardonnez les fautes de l'Impression comme celle d'une miserable Ieanne d'Angleterre que i'ay faite d'autresfois, où il y en a sans mentir autant que de mots, c'est une tragedie que i'avois cherement aymée mais par malheur elle fut iouée & imprimée en mon absence, comme ie vous ay desia dit, & l'Imprimeur sur quelques legeres apparences m'a fait passer pour mort dans son Epistre, quoy que Dieu mercy ie ne me sois iamais mieux porté.

The question of where the dramatist obtained material for this tragedy has already been treated by Professor H. Carrington Lancaster in his article "La Calprenède Dramatist."[5] He shows that La Calprenède is closer to the Italian historians Pollini[6] and Rosso,[7] than to any English accounts of Holinshed,[8] Grafton,[9] or Foxe,[10] or of the French de Thou.[11]

La Calprenède makes a tragedy full of deep human interest, showing Jane the victim of Northumberland's ambition and blinded to his real motive. At the rise of the curtain Jane has already been proclaimed queen, but certain nobles are holding a secret meeting to quell Northumberland's conspiracy and make plans to restore Mary Tudor, their true sovereign. In the play it is Gloucester who makes the bold speech in favor of Mary, whereas in history no Gloucester figures in this period. Richard III was the last Duke of Gloucester until in the seventeenth century that title was bestowed on the third son of Charles I. La Calprenède in this case used an English name without ascertaining the historical facts concerning the character. To remain in strict accord with history he should have given Arundel the rôle he gave to Gloucester, passing on to Pembroke the part he bestowed on Arundel. After the council-meeting, the scene shifts to Queen Jane's apartment in the Tower. Her bad dreams and visions of specters have given her a premonition of impending danger, which is confirmed by the entrance of Gloucester who arrests her along with Guilford and Northumberland.

[5] Printed in *Modern Philology*, 1920, pp. 121-141 and 345-360.

[6] Girolamo Pollini, *L'Historia Ecclesiastica della Rivoluzion d'Inghilterra*, Roma, 1594, pp. 250 ff. and 264 ff.

[7] Giulio Raviglio Rosso, *I Succesi d'Inghilterra dopo la Morte di Odoardo Sesto*, Ferrara, 1560, folio 6- folio 58.

[8] Holinshed, *Chronicles*, London, 1808, IV, p. 23.

[9] Grafton, *Chronicle*, London, 1809, II, p. 543.

[10] Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, London, Pratt, 4th ed., vol. VI, p. 424.

[11] de Thou, *Histoire Universelle*, London, 1734, vol. II, pp. 403-430.

The second act shows us Mary as queen—kind, compassionate, and much disturbed at having to treat her prisoners so harshly. Her younger sister Elizabeth, however, pictured as a stern and pitiless creature not willing to forget that she and Mary have been disinherited as illegitimate, assures the sovereign that death will be all too clement a treatment for such traitors. This portrait of Elizabeth surprises us; La Calprenède in his later play, *Le Comte d'Essex,* did not give her nearly so stony a heart, nor can we find any historical statements showing that she had any such inexorable feelings toward Lady Jane Grey. Mary grants Jane an audience—a meeting that was necessary to the drama, to picture the two rivals—but probably unhistorical.

In Act III we find Lady Jane imprisoned with her lady-in-waiting, Eleonor.[12] Guilford joins her to mourn their fate. Jane has been rather heartened by her interview with the queen, but Guilford warns her:

> Ie connois bien Marie, elle n'est pas si bonne,
> Outre qu'elle est d'un sang qui iamais ne pardonne,
> Et que son naturel n'est pas encor guery
> Des cruelles leçons de son père Henry. (Act III, scene II)

The scene of action now shifts to the council-chamber, where the Duke of Norfolk presides over the English barons in the coming trial of Northumberland. The trial scene, found earlier in Montchrestien's *Escossoise,* becomes a favorite device in seventeenth-century dramatic literature[13] and is copied later by Madame de Staël in her *Jane Gray.* Northumberland objects to being judged by the very men who have formerly consented to his plans; whereupon certain nobles speak up to protest their unfailing loyalty to Mary. Guilford becomes implicated in the course of the trial, much as Northumberland tries to take the entire blame of the conspiracy upon himself.

Act IV shows Mary still grieving over the rigorous action she must take, and condemning her father's cruel reign:

> On doit nommer son regne un Empire de fer
> Un antre de Cyclope, ou plustost un enfer. (Act IV, scene I)

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[12] Elizabeth Tilney and Eleyn are the only women mentioned in *The Chronicle of Queen Jane,* Camden Society, Old Series 48, London, 1850.

[13] Cf. La Calprenède, *Le Comte d'Essex;* Regnault, *Marie Stuart reine d'Ecosse;* Tristan l'Hermite, *Mariane.*

She is finally prevailed upon by Elizabeth and Norfolk[14] to leave Jane's fate to the council. The scene then shifts to Northumberland and Guilford, both of whom have been sentenced. La Calprenède has here somewhat changed the order of events. John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, was executed in August, 1553; Jane and Guilford were not led to the block until the following February, when they were executed on the same day. The dramatist evidently thought Jane would make a more pathetic picture if she were to suffer alone, and therefore despatched Guilford with his father.

In the final act Jane is mourning the loss of her husband and thinking only of following him when the Comte D'Erby (Derby) enters to communicate to her the sentence of the council. She gives him a diamond,[15] bidding him to take care of her lady-in-waiting, and goes off to her execution, which is later related by Derby to the queen:

> Elle marche à la mort comme au but de sa gloire,
> Regarde un eschaffaut comme un champ de victoire.
> (Act V, scene dernière)[16]

Her last words upon the scaffold have expressed regret that she had not refused the crown forced upon her. After the severing of the head from the body, the head bounds two or three times, and those standing close by hear it murmur "une basse parole."[17]

Mary at hearing the narration of Jane's death breaks out against her Council:

> Pour moy ie vous souhaite autant qu'il m'est possible
> Que vous puissiez tomber sous le regne d'un Roy,
> Qui pour se maintenir use comme moy,

---

[14] In history it was the imperial ambassador, Simon Renard, who persuaded Mary to this action.

[15] In English accounts it is Brydges, warden of the Tower, to whom she gives a prayer-book.

[16] Professor Lancaster thinks these lines are probably an imitation of Tristan l'Hermite's *Mariane*, Act V, scene II:

> Jamais Reine Amazone avecque plus de gloire
> Ne parut triomphante après une victoire.

Such sentiments are not in keeping with Jane's gentle character.

[17] Cf. Montchrestien, *L'Escossoise;* Buonarelli, *Il Solimano.*

Et pour vous souhaiter une fortune pire
Que ma sœur apres moy succede à cet Empire.
(Act V, scene dernière)

According to the Frères Parfaict:[18]

Sans quelque teinture de l'histoire d'Angleterre, il est impossible de comprendre le sujet de cette tragédie, qui a quelque mérite du côté des personnages. Ceux de Jeanne & du Duc de Northumberlan ne sont pas mal rendus. A l'égard des autres, ils sont faibles ou manqués.

But they make too severe a criticism of La Calprenède's dramatic technique. Even without a knowledge of English history, one can grasp the situation because the playwright has made a clear exposition in the first act. Gloucester's opening speech tells us of the conspiracy and of the nobles' proposed reaction. Nor in regard to characterization do the critics do justice to Mary and Elizabeth, both of whom stand out fully as clearly as Jane and Northumberland.

Professor Lancaster[19] has pointed out the resemblances to Montchrestien's *Escossoise* (1604). The queen is dealing with a rival queen; the fate of the victim is decided between the acts; the victim's head bounces after the execution. A close reading of both plays shows a few likenesses in expression,[20] though in general the tone of Montchrestien's tragedy is much more sententious than La Calprenède's historical narrative, which is surprisingly free from maxims. *Ieanne d'Angleterre* marks a great improvement over *l'Escossoise* in its dramatic action, for here the rival queens at least have a meeting. Yet this play too remains weak in its lack of motivation. If La Calprenède could have introduced the religious question or the Wyatt uprising, we could

[18] Frères Parfaict, *Histoire du Théâtre François*, Paris, Mercier et Saillant, 1745, vol. V, pp. 335-6.

[19] "La Calprenède Dramatist", *Modern Philology*, 1920, p. 133.

[20] (a) Montchrestien's *Escossoise*, Act IV, p. 91:

O fortune volage, est-ce ainsi que ta rouë
Des reines et des Rois inconstamment se joue!

cf. La Calprenède's *Ieanne*, Act II, scene I:

d'une inconstante rouë
Dont le cours éternel des Empires se jouë.

(b) "gros bouillons"; used to describe the blood at Mary's execution; the same phrase is used of Jane's hair at her execution.

(c) "cœur de rocher"; *Escossoise*, Act II; cf. *Ieanne d'Angleterre*, Act IV, scene II.

see some reason for Mary's action, but as the play stands, the queen has no motive for putting Jane to death after the execution of the traitorous Northumberland. Probably only in a chronicle play, unhampered by rules of unity, could the complex situation be completely depicted.

Ieanne d'Angleterre remains unique in its sympathetic delineation of the character of Mary Tudor. La Calprenède, instead of painting her the terrible "Bloody Mary" as subsequent dramatists have done, showing her thirsting for vengeance and delighting in persecutions,[21] makes her a benignant sovereign feeling real sympathy for Jane and regretting that she must treat her so rigorously. Several historians, among them Michelangelo Florio,[22] tell us that Mary was not directly responsible for Jane's execution, but none have gone so far as to picture this generous pity of Mary for her rival, and we must admit that La Calprenède has here slightly overstepped the bounds of history.

For more than a century no French dramatist wrote of Northumberland's conspiracy. Then Pierre-Antoine de La Place[23] composed *Jeanne Gray* which was read and received by the Comédie Française in 1777, but never performed. Four years later he published the play,[24] stating in the letter of *avertissement* that, since his other plays, *Venise Sauvée* and *Adèle de Ponthieu,* had not been well received by the Comédie in spite of flattering promises, he had not expected more favorable treatment of this one. Like most of the author's dramatic works, the play is not a *chef-d'œuvre* and does not present an historical picture of events. La Place portrays two powerful nobles, Northumberland and Pembroke, each struggling for control of the crown, each having a son through whom he hopes to gain his dominion, and

[21] The protestant historians, Foxe, Speed, Strype and Rapin, who have given a distorted picture of Mary, have unfortunately been copied by more recent historians, Hallam, Hume, and Froude.

[22] Michelangelo Florio, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

[23] La Place (1707-1793) is termed by Quérard one of the most prolific and the most mediocre writers of the 18th century. Besides writing several plays he made many translations of English novels.

[24] Printed in Paris in 1781 by Barrois l'aîné; the title-page bears the following quotataion:

Sed frustra leges et inania jura tuenti
scire mori, sors optima.

each working to unite that son to Lady Jane Gray, whose position as heir of Edward VI is paramount. In the opening scene, Guilford, who is here pictured only as Jane's lover, is insisting on Jane's accepting the crown, since by her refusal she might bring about again the struggles of York and Lancaster. Jane reluctantly accepts the crown, and Pembroke, learning that Jane has also accepted the hand of Guilford, precipitately decides to turn to the side of Mary Tudor in order to take revenge upon his enemy Northumberland. His son Derby, deeply in love with Jane,[25] feels overcome at news of her engagement, quarrels with Guilford, and determines to join his father. While Northumberland is raising an army in the north, Derby gains access to Jane in the Tower, is won over by the deep attachment of the lovers, and bids them beware of the spy Glaston, Northumberland's servant, who reports all their activities to Pembroke.

In a scene with his son, Pembroke confides that Mary, now in his power, shall accept Derby's hand in marriage, but Derby, unable to forget his infinite love for Jane, refuses such a union and begs his father to return to his allegiance for their real sovereign Queen Jane. Pembroke, apparently won over by his son's appeal, goes off ostensibly to negotiate for the life of Northumberland, but Jane, rightly suspecting his sincerity, is not surprised to hear the din of battle and to receive news of Guilford's death. The triumphant Pembroke bids her decide now whether she will keep her throne by a marriage with Derby or die on the scaffold. Jane proudly defies him and leaves the conqueror alone to marvel at the limitless power of love. When his son, Derby, is brought in wounded, Pembroke tells him he has committed all these bold deeds for Derby's sake alone. The young man, drawing his sword and killing himself, cries:

> Eh bien, je t'en punis!

Derby stands out as the heroic figure of the play, renouncing vengeance, and sacrificing his filial devotion in order to serve Jane and Guilford. Mary does not appear at all in the drama and is referred to in only one passage as " vile esclave de Rome,

[25] This attachment has no historical basis. The only connection between the two was that Pembroke's son Henry Herbert married Jane's sister Catherine Grey on the same day Guilford Dudley married her.

et que l'Espagne inspire." Even Jane becomes a rather secondary character to Derby's heroism.

Lady Jane Grey receives her full share of importance, however, in Madame de Staël's tragedy of 1787,[26] entitled *Jane Gray,* in which the martyred heroine is undoubtedly the central figure. The play begins on the day after Edward's funeral. Jane, recounting to her friend Clarice, recently returned from Dublin, her happiness with Guilford, is interrupted by the news of her having become heir of Edward VI. Much to Northumberland's consternation, she refuses the crown, even when he urges the religious motive, and only her consideration for Guilford's happiness makes her waver in her resolution. Guilford hastens to assure her she must consult no guide but her own conscience, then goes off to follow his father into battle. In the second act Northumberland returns defeated, from the struggle with Pembroke, leader of Mary's troops. He confesses to Jane and Guilford all the crimes he has committed to obtain the control of the state; only a fight to the finish can satisfy his ambition. The young couple, resolved to stand staunchly by Dudley instead of seeking refuge in France, soon suffers arrest along with him at the hands of Pembroke. That general, who has formerly loved Jane, now hopes to obtain a greater vengeance by securing her pardon, then treating her with disdain, and therefore promises she will be spared on the condition that she make the simple declaration of having had no share in Northumberland's plot. But since Guilford refuses to make such a declaration, Lady Jane refuses also, and all three prisoners, tried and convicted, are promptly conducted to the Tower. Pembroke, whose love for Jane returns in an overwhelming flood at seeing her led away to prison, begs his friend Dorset to devise some means for her escape. Dorset therefore advises Jane to choose the Lutheran priest Davison as the cleric to absolve her before her execution. But Jane, realizing that in this way she will save only herself and not Guilford, chooses the other priest. Pembroke, who learns from Jane that she has chosen Submer instead of Davison, promises, upon her entreaty, to save Guilford, deluding him with the hope that Jane is to be rescued also. In the final act we see Lady

[26] "Tragédie en cinq actes et en vers composée en 1787 et imprimée à un très-petit nombre d'exemplaires en 1790."

Jane prepared for death, lamenting her youth, but rejoicing in Guilford's escape. Yet in the very midst of her thanksgiving Guilford returns; having wrung the truth from Davison, he comes back to die with his love. Pembroke at this juncture is arrested, and sinks into Dorset's arms at the sound of the "tambour funèbre" announcing Jane's death.

Madame de Staël wrote in the preface of her tragedy:

> Le caractère de Jane Gray m'a transportée en le lisant dans l'histoire. J'avais à peu près son âge quand j'ai entrepris de le peindre, et sa jeunesse encourageait la mienne. Je voudrais avoir pu faire éprouver l'admiration que j'ai ressentie pour ce rare mélange de force et de sensibilité qui fait braver la mort et connaître le prix de la vie.

She makes Jane a tender, moving heroine, sacrificing all to love rather than to religious principle. Her death, too, comes as a result of that love, rather than of a refusal to accept Catholic doctrine,[27] or of the Wyatt and Suffolk rebellion.

Mary Tudor is not a character in the play, though several of the others allude to her as "la fière Marie," "reine cruelle," "barbare." Pembroke, her general, confesses to his friend Dorset:

> Dorset, au fond du cœur je déteste Marie;
> Tremblant peut-être encor pour son autorité,
> Elle tarde à montrer toute sa cruauté;
> Mais quand elle pourra se passer de prudence,
> Vous apprendrez bientôt à craindre sa puissance.
> (Act III, scene II)

As might be expected in a play written just prior to the French Revolution we find a stirring speech for democratic principles:

> Ah! des Anglais, Clarice, espère davantage:
> Non, leur cœur n'est pas né pour souffrir l'esclavage;
> Un jour du joug commun ils se délivreront;
> Pour l'intérêt public ils se réuniront;
> Des hommes rassemblés les décrets sont suprêmes:
> Ils peuvent annuler ce qu'ils ont fait eux-mêmes;
> Le pacte social ainsi recommencé
> Ne permet plus aux rois d'alléguer le passé.
> (Act IV, scene IV)

The author mentioned in the preface that she was familiar

[27] Cf. Florio, *op. cit.*. p. 72; Florimond de Rémond, *op. cit.*, p. 1025; Rosso, *op. cit.*, folio 44.

with the English play, *Lady Jane Grey* (1715), by Nicholas Rowe, but that, not wishing to translate it, she had decided not to imitate it. In the main she abides by that decision, though she pictures Pembroke in love with Lady Jane, as Rowe had done. Rowe's Pembroke is a character much like La Place's Derby, an offended lover, and a friend of Guilford, outraged that his affections should be betrayed by his dearest associate. Madame de Staël's Pembroke has no such intimate relations with Guilford.

In the preface, the authoress expresses her predilection for historical subjects:

Les sujets historiques me paraissent mériter la préférence sur ceux qui sont purement d'invention; les noms illustrés par nos souvenirs captivent d'avance l'intérêt; la vraisemblance est commandée par la vérité . . . Je crois avoir suivi l'histoire avec exactitude dans cette tragédie de *Jane Gray*. Le Comte de Pembroke est le seul caractère qu'elle ne m'ait pas donné; mais il ne lui est pas contraire.

Her phrase "avec exactitude" demands a very liberal interpretation since she makes several deviations from the historical accounts. She makes Jane Grey the niece of Henry VIII rather than the grand-niece that she really was; she dwells much on the lyric love of the young couple, which is not indicated in history;[28] and the plot of Pembroke for Jane's escape from prison and flight to France is completely her own invention. The names of minor characters, Dorset, Alfort, and Halifax, are absent from any accounts of the event.

The nineteenth-century dramas, free of all restrictions, give a much more complete picture of Lady Jane Grey's career. The *Jane Gray*[29] of Leblanc de Ferrière begins with a prologue, entitled "6 juillet 1553," which shows the conditions in London

[28] Sidney L. Lee writes in his article on Jane Dudley in the D. N. B.: "According to a Venetian visitor to England Lady Jane had vehemently resisted the match and only yielded to the personal violence of her father. It has been urged that Lady Jane's intercourse with her husband before marriage produced something like affection, but no evidence on the point is accessible."

[29] "Drame en trois actes et cinq tableaux, mise en scène de M. Dupuis, décors de M. Roscalon, musique de M. François Bellon, précédé du *6 juillet 1553*, prologue en un acte; représenté pour la première fois à Paris sur le théâtre dirigé par M. Dorsay (ci-devant Saqui)". Published in Paris by Gallet in 1834.

attending Edward VI's death. The general state of court life is expressed in the following enunciation:

Des crimes? On n'en connaît point en politique; le succès justifie tout: le criminel est celui qui succombe. (Act I, scene I)

Lady Radcliffe Moore, who has promised to cure the ailing king, advises that he be allowed to sleep. Left alone, she finds herself in the throes of her guilty conscience for having administered a potion to the monarch. Meanwhile, the Duke of Northumberland's plans proceed for his conspiracy. Guilford, entirely out of sympathy with his father's projects of altering the royal succession and placing Lady Jane on the throne, is soon joined by Lady Radcliffe Moore, who announces the death of the king, confesses her own guilt, and hints at Northumberland's complicity. The young husband, shocked at this frightful revelation, vows his wife shall not be implicated in such crimes, but at that very moment he hears cries of: "Vive Jane Gray!" "Vive la Reine!" And so the prologue closes.

In Act I we are transported to a quiet country-home at Chelsea (Schilsea) far removed from the turmoil of the prologue. Jane Grey is here pictured leading a retired life, surrounded by her books and meditating deeply on philosophical and theological problems.[30] Her husband, Guilford; her father, the Duke of Suffolk; and her father-in-law, Northumberland, hereupon arrive from London with the news that she has been proclaimed Queen of England. Jane flatly refuses the crown, and again the religious motive has to be strongly advanced in order to make her yield.

Act II tells of Northumberland's death and Mary's entrance into London as queen. Mary evinces in this play all the jealous and vindictive traits that partisan historians have ascribed to her. When the councillor, reading the conviction of Jane and her accomplices, begs the sovereign to show mercy, Mary asks to be left alone. In her monologue she reveals her fears of Lady Jane's charms; she is a dangerous rival and must therefore die. But since it will be more politic to defer the sentence, she will merely keep the couple in captivity for the present.

[30] Several historians bear witness to her erudition: Florio, *op. cit.*, p. 60; Pollini, *op. cit.*, p. 351; Rosso, *op. cit.*, fol. 44; Foxe, *op. cit.*, vol. VI, pp. 416-425; Grafton, *op. cit.*, p. 543.

The last act shows us the execution of Guilford and Lady Jane on February 12, 1554. Sir Bruges, lieutenant of the Tower, comes to Jane's prison, announcing that she must die because her father has joined the Protestant conspirators who oppose Mary's plans of Catholic protection. As in the historical accounts of her death,[31] Lady Jane refuses to see her husband before their execution, on the ground that it will weaken the morale of both. In a final tableau the young martyr comes clothed in white satin, very calm, speaking to the people and praying, while mounting the scaffold. The drama closes with the stage direction that the tableau is to be a reproduction of Paul Delaroche's painting—a good example of that " relation des arts " in the romantic period which Paul Hazard has studied.

The play abounds in historical inaccuracies; Jane Grey is called a relative of *Margaret* of Suffolk, rather than of *Mary*, the second sister of Henry VIII; Northumberland's death in battle is not authentic; Mary's black character is a distortion; and Guilford's knowledge of his father's plans is unlikely. Leblanc uses also the rumor of Edward's having been poisoned, which has been hinted at by several historians,[32] but not definitely established.

Further deviations from history appear in the *Jane Grey*[33] of Alexandre Soumet[34] and Madame Gabrielle Daltenheym produced at the Odéon in 1844, in which Mary Tudor is shown not only vindictive but also jealous of Jane's affection for Guilford. The scene, laid first in Dorset where, as in Leblanc's drama, Jane

[31] de Thou, *Histoire Universelle*, vol. II, p. 429; Rosso, *I Successi d'Inghilterra dopo la Morte di Odoardo Sesto*, folio 44.

[32] See note 2 on p. 53 for references. William Camden in the introduction of his *History of the most renowned and victorious Princess Elizabeth*, London, Flesher, 1688, says: " taken away by an untimely death (whether through any natural disease, or by poison is uncertain)."

[33] " Tragédie en cinq actes et en vers, représentée pour la première fois, à Paris, sur le second Théâtre Français (l'Odéon) le 30 mars 1844." Published in the *Magasin Théâtral*, vol. 37, Paris, Marchant, 1844.

[34] Alexandre Soumet (1788-1845) poet and dramatist, author of the epic, *la Divine Epopée* (1840), the operas *Pharamond*, *David*, *Le Siège de Corinthe*, and the tragedy *Jane Grey*. He composed the last-named work in collaboration with his daughter Gabrielle Soumet (Madame Beuvain d'Altenheim). For a study of Soumet's life and work see the thesis of Anna Beffort, Luxembourg, 1908.

devotes herself to the study of philosophy, here shows her translating *La Mort de Socrate* with her tutor, Roger Ascham.[35] But while Jane leads a life of retirement, Northumberland lays his plots for remaining in power, orders a secret marriage between Guilford and Jane Grey, and in a monolog reveals to the audience the new will he has secured before the death of Edward VI. Quite unexpectedly and surely with complete lack of verisimilitude, Mary Tudor on her way to London to be crowned now appears at the country-house in Dorset to pay a visit to her cousin Jane Grey, hoping incidentally for an interview with young Guilford of whom she is deeply enamored. At knowledge of the young couple's marriage and Jane's private coronation, her rage knows no bounds; she enlists Surrey, the chancellor,[36] to work her vengeance, and in Act IV orders Jane judged by the council, at the same time providing a means of Guilford's escape to France. But because he prefers death with his beloved Jane to life without her, Guilford returns to suffer with her and thus forces Mary to her last move; the Tudor queen enters Jane's cell, promising to spare her life and pardon all her accomplices on the condition that she will sign a divorce from Guilford. Jane agrees to sign if Guilford will do so, but she counts on his love to save them from such an extremity. The young man, in order to save Jane Grey's life, has already signed the divorce but has also taken poison so as to free himself from any royal entanglements. When Jane discovers what her husband has done, she tears up the divorce, and the wrathful queen delivers her to be killed.

The authors owe much to the tragedy of Madame de Staël in their conception of the young lovers, in the plan of Guilford's

[35] Roger Ascham was also the tutor of Queen Elizabeth. Camden says of him: "He was a while Schoolmaster to Queen Elizabeth, and her Secretary for the Latin Tongue. Nevertheless, being too—too much given to Dicing and Cock fighting, he lived and died a poor man; leaving behind him two most excellent Books, monuments of his Wit, in the English Tongue, whereof he intituled the one *Toxophilus* and the other *Scholarcha*." *Op. cit.*, p. 121.

[36] Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey and third Duke of Norfolk (1473-1554), had been imprisoned before Mary's accession. She freed him from the Tower but made Stephen Gardiner, not the Earl of Surrey, her chancellor. Thomas Howard did preside, however, over the court which tried Northumberland.

escape to France, and in the names of Davison and Alfort; they follow Leblanc in having Northumberland killed in battle instead of executed, and in the picture of Jane's retired life in Dorset. As in all nineteenth-century representations of her, Mary stands in a most unsympathetic light; Northumberland says of her:

> Messeigneurs, nous avons nos droits à soutenir;
> Oui, deux reines sont là, songeons à l'avenir.
> L'une de fanatisme et de haine nourrie,
> S'appellerait un jour sanglante Marie;
> Et si j'ai de son cœur bien compris les défauts,
> Etoufferait nos lois sous dix mille échafauds.
> (Act III, scene IV)

Mary's vindictive spirit shows in her speech to Surrey:

> J'y monterai, Surrey, répandant l'épouvante,
> Cœur glacé, front d'airain, loi terrible et vivante!
> (Act IV, scene I)

Historical inaccuracies abound: Mary speaks of being already promised to Philip II; Jane is pictured as an orphan; Mary mentions Jane's queenship as having lasted one day, whereas she ruled for about ten; Jane cites Macbeth's interview with the witches, in which we recognize the interest of the nineteenth-century authors rather than that of the sixteenth-century heroine. The portrayal of Mary Tudor in love with Guilford was a new element in the Lady Jane Grey affair, which later finds repetition in the drama of Nus and Brot.

Subsequent nineteenth-century dramatists wander even further from the historical facts. Aristide Carénou, in a play of 1850 called *Jane Gray,* makes his "drame historique" a melodrama with all the concomitants of mystery and terror. The first act shows a band of conspirators meeting at midnight in an ancient priory. A mysterious man—who remains mysterious throughout the drama—shows Northumberland an easy method of poisoning Edward VI so as to get control of the kingdom. The man is poor and will do anything, if well paid in gold. Dudley accepts his proposal and plans develop for the plot to place Lady Jane on the throne.

In the second act Jane at Durham House [37] has had a bad dream in which she has seen much misfortune and bloodshed

[37] The name of Dudley's house in London.

for having accepted a crown. Dudley refuses to be balked by a young girl's dream, and confides his plot to her father Suffolk who is won over by arguments about the religious crisis. The mysterious man appears again to state that Edward is improving; he must be poisoned to bring success to Dudley's venture. A sorceress holds conference with Dudley, trying to prevent his administering the poison by showing all the suffering he will cause in the execution of his ambitious plans. He seriously wounds her in order to escape with the poison, but she vows she will live to tell of his crimes.

In Act III Dudley announces the death of the king, and Lady Jane is forced into the queenship. But the tide soon begins to turn and all are making plans to escape from the Tower by a bark in the Thames when Mary enters with her soldiers and orders their arrest. In the fourth act Jane is led before Mary, who accuses her as a usurper and sends her to the Tower. Northumberland, charged with the king's murder, and denounced by the sorceress, finds his execution hastened. Some hope is entertained for Jane's liberation during the Thomas Wyatt revolt, but the rebellion proves short-lived, and in the final act we see her led to the scaffold just after the execution of Suffolk and Guilford.

Mary Tudor is here shown as a vengeful woman exulting in her triumph over Jane:

> C'est à moi maintenant de te tenir ployée sous mon genou, à moi de te faire demander pardon, et de te dire après: "Meurs!" (Act V, scene V)

She has a sinister feeling for her subjects:

> Elle me hait, ma bonne ville de Londres; elle me déchirerait à morceaux! . . . Et quant à ces lords qui se courbent devant moi, qui me sourient et me flattent, je ne les aime pas, ces lords, leur ironie à la bouche et leurs paroles à voix basse. (Act V, scene VI)

The last degree of the grotesque was reached in the five-act drama of Eugène Nus [38] and Alphonse Brot, entitled *Jane Grey*,[39] in which Mary, enamored of Guilford, as in the tragedy

[38] Eugène Nus, born at Châlons-sur-Saône in 1816, came to Paris in 1837 to begin his literary career. He became known by his *Jacques le Corsaire* (1844).

[39] Presented for the first time at the Théâtre de l'Ambigu-Comique,

of Soumet, puts the young couple to death to satisfy her own spite rather than to save the state. In this complicated intrigue young Edward VI plays an important rôle.

The first act shows the two opposite parties gradually lining up, Dudley's ambitions matched by those of Lord Arundel, who is Dudley's hated enemy and Mary's main supporter, "le manche de sa hache." Mary, however, would propose peace with Dudley if she could marry his son Guilford whom she passionately loves. Dudley consents on condition that his enemy Arundel be delivered to him as a pledge. But trouble begins when the Duke of Suffolk presents his daughter, Lady Jane, at court. Guilford falls in love with her and is aghast at the news of Dudley's having concluded a union between him and Mary. King Edward, discovering the love of Guilford and Jane, commands Dudley to allow their marriage; Dudley therefore meditates a new plan, and asks the Duke of Suffolk for the hand of Jane. When Mary learns of his *volte-face,* she cries to Dudley:

Milord, vous n'avez pas voulu que je mette un trône dans votre famille, j'y mettrai des tombeaux. (Act I, scene XV)

In the second act we learn of the critical condition of Edward VI. The famous physician of Francis I, Cornelius Agrippa, describes the boy's illness as a mental sickness in which a too active mind does not give the other organs sufficient vital substance. He offers to cure the king by administering a potion which will throw the boy into a forty-eight hour stupor, after which the patient will awake cured. The king drinks the potion and Dudley announces the death of Edward VI, whereupon Arundel proclaims Mary Queen of England, while the cunning Dudley produces the new will of Edward VI, which names Lady Jane as heir. In Act III Mary at White-Hall is raging at having been despoiled of the throne, while Lady Jane, wedded to Guilford, is being crowned. Her loyal Arundel soon musters a troop in her behalf so that she can march upon Jane during the coronation ceremony, wresting the royal mantle and diadem from her rival. Act IV takes us down into the murky cellars of Windsor Castle, where servants are watching the body of Edward VI. The pa-

Nov. 6, 1856, with "musique nouvelle" of Amédée Artus. It was a re-working of Brot's novel of the same name.

tient wakens, feels cured, and is asking multitudinous questions about his lugubrious surroundings when Dudley enters announcing that Mary, not Jane, is now queen. He is overjoyed at Edward's resuscitation, but the shrewd boy retorts:

Si Jane Grey était reine, monsieur le duc, remercieriez-vous Dieu de ce que ce cercueil est vide? (Act IV, scene V)

He tells Dudley he is tired of royalty and of life:

Vous n'avez echoué qu'à demi dans votre crime, milord duc . . . mon corps échappe à votre cercueil, mais vous y avez enfermé mon cœur! (Act IV, scene V)

He then crawls back into his secret room behind the tapestry. Down in these same dark cellars Mary and Lady Jane have a stormy interview. Mary cruelly rails at Jane's anguish, bidding her choose between saving her husband and her father. She knows Northumberland is the only man really guilty, but she says Jane Grey must also die.

Tu mourras parce que Guilfort t'aime . . . l'Europe croira que je punis l'usurpatrice, moi seule saurai que je frappe ma rivale d'amour. (Act IV, scene VIII)

Young Edward, who has overheard the bitter scene, at this juncture issues from his secret room and decides to resume his reign. Mary, insisting that he must be a phantom, calls Arundel, who drives the child back behind the tapestry and kills him.

In Act V Jane and Guilford are imprisoned in the Tower of London. Guilford is trying to hearten Jane, who has a fear of Death, when Mary once more enters to offer liberty to both, on the condition that Guilford shall be hers. Guilford, thinking he has no right to take Jane's life, reluctantly consents, but Jane decides on their death, and the play ends with her mounting the scaffold—again the tableau imitating the painting of Paul Delaroche.

None of the characters is presented with any historical truth, though some are interesting to study. Young Edward VI, whose consumption led him to an early grave, is here represented as the victim of a nervous affliction.[40] He himself gives a clear definition of the neurasthenic helmet:

[40] Perhaps the authors were influenced by the detailed studies of the nervous system in which the nineteenth century was so deeply interested.

Souvent, j'ai là, autour du front, comme un cercle de fer . . . j'ai trouvé un nom à cette maladie . . . un nom que les médecins ne connaissent pas . . . je l'appelle la couronne. (Act I, scene X)

Edward has pleasant recollections of childish pleasures with Jane in Dorset. Reading Aesop's *Fables* in Greek or catching butterflies was much more agreeable than ruling a kingdom:

Roi . . . on me le répète assez pour que je ne l'oublie pas . . . on s'arme de ce mot-là pour enchaîner ma vie . . . si je manifeste un désir, si j'exprime une volonté, on s'incline bien respectueusement pour me dire: Sire, c'est impossible, vous êtes roi! Le plus obscur de mes sujets fait ce qui lui plaît; mais sous mon manteau royal, je suis l'humble serviteur de l'étiquette . . . tu ne connais pas cela, toi, l'étiquette . . . une sorte de pendule qui règle tous vos mouvements. (Act I, scene X)

He speaks much as did the unhappy little queen of *Ruy Blas,* whose Camerera Mayor prohibited every pleasure.

Arundel is here shown particularly hostile and unfeeling. Not only does he cruelly murder young Edward, but he keeps inciting Mary to acts of vengeance by reminding her of all that Dudley has made her suffer. When he has succeeded in rousing her to acts of violence, he delightedly cries:

A la bonne heure! . . . Je retrouve la fille de Henri VIII . . . Sur ma parole, Madame, j'avais peur que vous ne fussiez plus que la sœur d'Edouard VI! (Act II, scene XIII)

Dudley is as usual the ambitious noble whose greed for power pushes him into all his crimes. Announcing the king's death after the potion has been administered, he quiets all cries of conscience with:

Reproche-t-on au lion la proie qu'il dévore? . . . au chêne les plantes qu'il étouffe . . . Faible arbrisseau, tu m'empêchais de croître; c'était à toi de périr. (Act III, scene VI)

Le secret de la vie, c'est la mort (Act III, scene IX).

Mary Tudor, in keeping with all her portraits in eighteenth and nineteenth-century drama is the malignant woman, soured by her unhappy childhood,[41] and now ready to wreak vengeance.[42] Mary coldly views Arundel's interest in her welfare:

[41] "J'ai grandi seule, mon enfance annonçait mon avenir . . . personne ne m'a aimée . . . personne ne m'aime" (Act II, scene X).

[42] "Semez l'or et la haine . . . sauvons ma couronne, sauvons nos vengeances" (Act III, scene III).

Vous m'êtes dévoué comme Lord Dudley est dévoué à mon frère . . . par ambition . . . Edouard VI est le présent, moi, milord, je suis l'avenir! (Act I, scene III)

Young Guilford can think of her only as that "princesse lugubre . . . l'effroi de la cour . . . traînant au milieu de nos plaisirs ses rancunes impuissantes et ses espérances déçues." Cruelty marks her treatment of Jane Grey as it will mark her treatment of other enemies:

Marie la Sanglante, soit, Robert Dudley. Le nom que tu viens de me donner, je l'écrirai dans nos annales avec le sang de mes ennemis. (Act V, scene VII)

Cruelty and a vindictive spirit mingled with yearnings for love, are the characteristics which Victor Hugo has given the queen in his *Marie Tudor*,[43] in the preface of which he says he wishes to make her "une reine qui soit femme. Grande comme reine, Vraie comme femme." We are no longer concerned with the Lady Jane Grey story, we transcend even the world of fact, to dwell in the playwright's fantasy. He represents Mary Tudor as leading a "joyeuse vie," infatuated with her Italian lover Fabiano Fabiani on whom she heaps wealth and honors, and who shamefully betrays her constantly. Fabiani is now seducing a young girl, Jane, a ward of the workman Gilbert, because he has discovered that she is of noble birth and heir of John Talbot, who was killed for supporting Catherine of Aragon, and whose lands Fabiani has received as a gift from the queen. Gilbert, heart-broken at finding his young ward Jane, whom he loves passionately, untrue to him, is offered a means of vengeance by Simon Renard, Spanish envoy at the English court, on condition that he will sacrifice his life to obtain his revenge. Gilbert, in his interview with the queen, refuses to take action since nothing has as yet been proven, but Mary, bent on vengeance, secures it in her own way: ordering Gilbert to lift a poniard, and then calling in her courtiers, she accuses him of having made an attempt upon her life, and charges Fabiani with having instigated the action. She commands that both be delivered to justice.

But Simon Renard was completely justified in saying:

[43] First produced November 6, 1833, at the Théâtre de la Porte-Saint-Martin.

Quand une femme règne le caprice règne. Alors la politique n'est plus chose de calcul mais chose de hasard. On ne peut compter sur rien. (Ière Journée, scene I)

Mary, formerly so intent on destroying her lover, now in a flood of returning love wishes to liberate him from his prison,[44] just as the contrite Jane wishes to save her loyal Gilbert. Mary plots a means for Fabiani's escape from confinement, but the people, stirred into sedition by Simon Renard, demand his death. Renard advises her:

Choisissez, Madame, ou cette tête au peuple, ou cette couronne à Madame Elisabeth. (IIIe Journée, scene IX)

Under the ambassador's coercion, Mary promises that her lover shall die, but she secretly begs the warden of the Tower to secure his life by letting another die in his place. A final tableau shows the death-procession passing from the Tower to the public square. Both Jane and the queen are watching the prisoner enveloped in a black sack—Jane, sure that it is Fabiani since Gilbert is safe; Mary, sure that it is Gilbert since she has commanded that the workman die in Fabiani's place. After the procession has passed, Mary, to make certain of having saved her lover, orders the man in the cell to be brought out. It is Gilbert who appears; Fabiani is dead:

La Reine: Mort? . . . Mort? Qui a osé?
Simon Renard: Moi. J'ai sauvé la reine et l'Angleterre. (IIIe Journée, 2e partie, scene II)

According to Paul and Victor Glachant,[45] who have studied the manuscript of the play, the first version gave an ending in which Fabiani was the prisoner to be saved and Mary Tudor the woman to triumph:

On a vu déjà par l'exemple de *Marion de Lorme* que Victor Hugo volontiers allait au dénouement cruel, "eschylien", selon le mot, et qu'il n'hésitait pas à sacrifier le personnage sympathique. Plus tard . . . soit bonté naturelle, soit intervention de ses amis ou de ses interprètes . . . il consentait parfois à modifier son inspiration première pourvu que l'ensemble de l'œuvre n'en souffrît point.[46]

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[44] "La vie de cet homme est nécessaire à ma vie" (IIIe Journée, scene IV).

[45] *Essai Critique sur le Théâtre de Victor Hugo. Les Drames en Prose,* Paris, Hachette, 1903.

[46] *Op. cit.,* p. 129.

Marie Tudor is probably one of the weakest of Victor Hugo's plays, exaggerated both in plot and in characterization, and the critics have showered down upon it a storm of invective. Francisque Sarcey,[47] attending a performance in 1873, confesses having been completely bored at this melodrama "maladroitement bâtie." He considers the epithets which the queen hurls at Fabiani in denouncing him especially offensive,[48] and he cannot understand the logic of her deferred action: if she is queen and absolutist, why make so many unnecessary accusations, why not simply dispose of a man whom all England hates? Sarcey's greatest objection to the long-drawn-out plot is that he is interested in none of the characters:

> Cette reine est une bête féroce, ce Fabiano un misérable, ce grand seigneur un coquin ténébreux; l'amie de la reine une malheureuse qui s'est prostituée à Fabiano; quant au ciseleur, la seule figure un peu sympathique de ce drame, il a joué dans toute cette intrigue un rôle bien singulier.[49]

Biré[50] points out that the play was a failure at its *première,* as Hugo himself confesses,[51] not simply because it was poorly acted, but also because it was a poor drama. He feels that to make Mary a Messalina was to overstep the limits not only of history, but even of art; and the other characters he considers no less false: Fabiani is inconsistent, and Simon Renard is a strange kind of diplomat who does all his thinking aloud, having no secrets from anyone, even the executioner.

[47] *Quarante Ans de Théâtre,* Paris, 1901, vol. IV, p. 43.

[48] *Op. cit.,* p. 44: ". . . elle lui crache à la face les epithètes les plus déshonorantes et quand on croit qu'elle a fini, elle recommence, elle ressasse les mêmes injures."

[49] *Op. cit.,* p. 45.

[50] Edmond Biré, *Victor Hugo après 1830,* Paris, Perrin, 1899, tome I, p. 100.

[51] *Victor Hugo raconté,* Paris, Hetzel, tome II, p. 361: "Tout alla bien jusqu'à l'entrée du bourreau, que l'auteur avait conservée et qui fut en effet le signal des sifflets. Toute la troisième partie, surtout la scène de Gilbert et de Jane, excita des ricanements continuels . . . Mlle Georges elle-même ne fut plus ménagée; son imprécation contre Londres fut bourrasquée; la grande scène finale entre les deux femmes fut sifflée d'un bout à l'autre."

[52] *Op. cit.,* p. 108.

Biré,[52] Blaze de Bury,[63] and Hippolyte Parigot [54] all call *Marie Tudor* a "refacimento" of the *Christine* of Alexandre Dumas with Mary as Christine, Fabiani as Monaldeschi, and Lady Jane Talbot as Paula.

Brunetière [55] says that from Victor Hugo's preface, in which he states that he aims in this drama "de poser largement sur la scène dans toute sa réalité terrible ce formidable triangle qui apparaît si souvent dans l'histoire: une reine, un favori, un bourreau," we should expect a simple subject such as the following: a queen, tired of her lover who deceives her, avenges herself by delivering him to the executioner. The critic regrets that the poet should have loaded so simple a theme with the complicated inventions of his fecund imagination, introducing minor characters, each with secret machinations, and inserting so many other intrigues that the drama violates all logic. Mary Duclaux [56] says one must distinguish Victor Hugo's "œuvre" from his "besogne" and she confesses that most of the author's dramas must be considered "besogne."

The play suffered several parodies: [57]

Marie-crie-Fort, pièce en quatre endroits et en cinq quarts d'heure, 1833 in-12. Chez Gallet à Paris. Imprimerie Setier.

Marie, tu dors encore, drame presque historique en deux actes et trois quarts d'heure, mêlés de chant par Armand Chaulieu et Battaille, (pièce représentée à Paris, chez Babre, boulevard Saint-Martin, 12).

One of the verses runs:

Pas jolie,
Pas polie,
Avec sa voix de stentor,
Pas bégueule,
Forte en gueule
V'la comme est Mari' Tudor!

It seems almost unnecessary to state that the play has no his-

[53] Henri Blaze de Bury, *Alexandre Dumas, sa vie, son temps, son œuvre*, Paris, 1885, p. 39.

[54] Hippolyte Parigot, *Le Drame d'Alexandre Dumas*, Paris, Calmann Lévy, 1898, p. 145.

[55] Ferdinand Brunetière, *Victor Hugo*, Paris, Hachette, 1902, p. 198.

[56] *Victor Hugo*, Paris, Plon, 1925, p. 68.

[57] Alexandre Blanchard, *Le Théâtre de Victor Hugo et la parodie*, Paris, Picard, 1904, pp. 5-6.

torical foundation; Fabiani is fictitious, and Mary Tudor is grossly maligned in her rôle of shameless courtesan. No parents such as Victor Hugo found can be discovered for the orphan Jane, since in history no John Talbot lost his life under Henry VIII. It is true that the courtiers, Chandos, Clinton, and Montagu, form an historical setting, but they unfortunately remain completely in the background. The question has been raised whether Victor Hugo was giving a picture of a French court under cover of an English setting. Flaubert in his *Bouvard et Pécuchet* [58] has the Count remark during a literary discussion:

> Victor Hugo a été sans pitié, oui, sans pitié pour Marie-Antoinette, en traînant sur la claie le type de la reine dans le personnage de Marie Tudor.

The twentieth century, uninterested in historical drama, has left Mary Tudor almost unnoticed. In 1913 Jean Joseph Renaud made a dramatization of the Baroness Orczy's novel, *The Tangled Skein,* under the title of *La Vivante Image,*[59] a romantic tale showing Mary at the moment of choosing her Spanish husband. One group of nobles would have her choose the Duke of Wessex, an English lord, for her husband, while the Cardinal de Moreno is working in Philip's interests. But Wessex is in love with young Ursula de Glynde, a lady at court, whom he knows only under an assumed name. The Duke's enemies, to prevent his marriage to Ursula, place the gypsy Mirrab, who is the "living image" of Ursula, in an uncompromising position. The gypsy stabs Don Miguel, the Spanish ambassador, and Wessex, thinking it is Ursula who has committed the murder takes the blame and is arrested. Mary, who loves the Duke of Wessex, would pardon him and make him king, if only he loved her. Her love rises even to magnanimity in her promise to the Cardinal that she will give her hand to Philip, provided he will save Wessex. Meanwhile the Cardinal forces Ursula to confess to Mirrab's crime to spare her lover Wessex, but Mirrab opportunely arrives to tell the truth and show up the Cardinal's trickery. Mary agrees to sign the contract of marriage to Philip, giving Wessex to Ursula.

[58] Gustave Flaubert, *Œuvres Complètes,* Paris, Société des Editions d'Art, 1902, p. 198.

[59] "Drame en quatre actes et cinq tableaux", produced for the first time at the Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt, October 27, 1913.

Quite evidently this romance is the fantastic tale of adventure in which the Baroness Orczy revels, but which is so far removed from fact that none of the characters seems real. The gypsies, the disguises, the complicated love-plot, and the happy ending after the proper amount of suspense and terror would compose an excellent scenario for the cinema, but are hardly worthy of serious drama.

Robert de Flers, writing in the *Figaro* of October 28, 1913, justly criticises the play's technique, calling attention to the fact that the intrigue is at the same time too complicated in its preparations and too simple in its developments, all of which can be foreseen. A critic in *Comœdia* of the same date questions the historical truth of the drama:

Dans quelle mesure cette aventure de Marie Tudor et du duc de Wessex est-elle historique? J'avoue que l'amour qu'éprouva la terrible fille d'Henri VIII pour le sire de Courtenay me paraît plus connu. Mais peu importe au théâtre. La Marie Tudor Messaline des romantiques s'éloigne encore plus de l'histoire que celle de M. J. Joseph Renaud.[60]

Queen Mary, more than any other of the Tudor monarchs has been grossly misrepresented in history, and consequently in literature. The first Protestant historians, actuated by religious zeal, showed her delighting in the shedding of innocent blood and justly earning the title of "that Jezebel of England." French eighteenth and nineteenth-century dramatists, perhaps unconsciously imitating these writers, perhaps intentionally adopting their views for anti-clerical purposes, have continued the antipathetic picture of Mary. A more impartial portrait is given by Sidney Lee:

Mary inherited a high spirit and strong will from both parents . . . Although illness undoubtedly soured Mary's temper, and she was always capable of fits of passion, she treated her servants kindly, was gentle toward children, and was, according to the dictates of her religion, very charitable to the poor . . . The policy of burning protestants on which the adverse judgment mainly depends, was not lightly adopted. Mary had resolved to bring her people back to the old religion and it was only when all other means seemed to be failing her that she had recourse to persecution, in the efficacy of which, as an ultimate result, she had been educated to believe.[61]

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[60] G. de Pawlowski in *Comœdia*, Oct. 27, 1913.

[61] Lee's article on Mary Tudor in the Dictionary of National Biography, vol. 36, p. 352.

No French playwright has given us a picture of the lonely woman, melancholy and sick with dropsy, ill-advised in her policy, disappointed in her subjects and in despair at Philip's neglect of her—the woman that Tennyson shows us in his *Queen Mary* (1875):

> Mother of God,
> Thou knowest never woman meant so well,
> And fared so ill in this disastrous world.
> My people hate me and desire my death. (Act V, scene II)

Her young sister Elizabeth in the closing scene [62] says of her what we too must say of Mary Tudor:

> Her life was winter, for her spring was nipt:
> And she loved much: pray God she be forgiven.

[62] Act V, scene V, of *Queen Mary*.

CHAPTER V

Elizabeth at Kenilworth Castle

The lonely, heart-broken Mary Tudor passed away in 1558, leaving the throne to her sister Elizabeth, a handsome, spirited young woman of twenty-five, whose rule was to make England a first power in Europe and whose fame men have sung in all countries and in all centuries. In French drama Elizabeth has received much more notice than any other Tudor monarch, so that more than a single chapter is required for a study of the plays concerning her reign. The present one will review principally those which deal with the episodes of her youth.

From her tutor, Roger Ascham, the daughter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn had received a thorough education in the classics, which she put to good use on her visit to the University of Oxford in 1566, as the historian Camden relates:

> Being much delighted with the Pleasantness of the Place, the Beautifulness of the Colleges and the Wits and most exquisite Learning of the Students, who spent a great part of the Night in Comedies and Tragedies, and the Days in learned Disputations: for which she gave them large Thanks in a Latin Oration, with singular Sweetness of speech, and so most gratiously bade them farewell.[1]

This visit to Oxford in 1566 receives mention in a tragedy, *Campian* (1891), by the Jesuit Longhaye. Although Elizabeth does not figure as a character, in the prologue her presence at the University is reported by the students who have seen her deliver the prizes:

> Ayant grâce de femme et majesté de reine,
> Riante et portant haut sous la couronne d'or
> Cette fierté qui coule aux veines des Tudor!
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Docte, capable enfin dans ce tournoi d'esprits
> De nommer le vainqueur et de donner le prix.

The remainder of the play portrays the religious difficulties of

[1] William Camden, *The History of the Most renowned and victorious Princess Elizabeth, late Queen of England*, 4th edition, London, Flesher, 1688, p. 83.

1581 when the returning seminarists from Catholic countries suffered the extreme penalty in England because they refused to conform to the Established Church.

Another play concerning Elizabeth's youth called *Dinah l'Egyptienne,* a three-act *drame* by Saint-Yves [2] and Louis Lefebvre, was first produced April 18, 1840, at the Théâtre de la Porte-Saint-Antoine. The first act shows Elizabeth as a young girl, escaping the surveillance of her governess and enjoying the liberty of the park at Windsor, where she delights in the entertainment of a passing gypsy band. Among the gypsies is a young girl Dinah, whom they have stolen and whom the nomads fear to lose if the girl learns her identity. Dinah's servant, spared a beating by the intercession of a young noble, Arthur Nevil, delivers into the young Englishman's hands a mysterious box which he asks him to transmit to Elizabeth as soon as she becomes Queen of England. After the passing of the gypsies, Elizabeth and her companion, Lady Love, issue from the bushes and appear before Arthur. Without revealing her identity, Elizabeth offers to carry his *placet* soliciting a captaincy before Queen Mary and promises him her protection. Dinah has fallen in love with the young Englishman, who in turn is devoted to his mysterious benefactress.

After the accession of Elizabeth, Dinah's servant reveals to her the fact that she is the last survivor of the famous Norris family. She must go before the new queen to receive Elizabeth's recognition and gratitude for Henry Norris' devotion to her mother, Anne Boleyn. Proofs of Dinah's identity, enclosed in the precious box entrusted to Arthur Nevil, have been stolen, however, by the gypsies and must be recovered. Arthur Nevil, who has also come to Elizabeth's court, is astounded to find his adored benefactress Queen of England. Dinah proves her devotion to her lover by throwing herself between him and the gypsy's knife, aimed at him. After the recovery of the proofs of Dinah's identity, the Virgin Queen unites her two loyal supporters, Lady Norris and Sir Arthur Nevil, at the same time refusing the offers of Philip II with the statement: "Mon époux, Messieurs, c'est le royaume d'Angleterre."

[2] A pseudonym for Deaddé, who collaborated to write several gay vaudevilles. Under his own name he contributed articles to *Encyclopédie des Gens du Monde.*

The characters other than Elizabeth are not historical, though the names, Neville and Norris, were those of famous families in this period. The dialog, graceful and sparkling, thoroughly suited to the romantic episode, characterizes the *vaudeville* rather than the more serious type of drama which an interest in Elizabeth's reign has elsewhere evoked.

Another example of Elizabeth's fondness for romantic escapades and for traveling around the town incognita appears in the three-act comic opera of Rosier and de Leuven, entitled *Le Songe d'une nuit d'été,* and performed for the first time at the Opéra-Comique, April 20, 1850.[3] The first act shows the young queen and her lady-in-waiting, Olivia, who have come masked to witness the production of a Shakespearian drama. A storm has driven them, after the performance, into an inn. While Lady Olivia succumbs to fright, Elizabeth thoroughly relishes the adventure:

> Oui, je suis courageuse,
> J'ai l'âme aventureuse
> Et je me sens heureuse
> Quand je suis libre enfin!
> J'aimerais, je le jure,
> Bravant la nuit obscure,
> A courir aventure
> Comme un vrai paladin. (Act I, scene IV)

At the inn Elizabeth finds young Shakespeare disgusted with the degraded life he leads and discouraged with his writing. She subsequently evinces signs of sentiment and tenderness for the poet, but resolves to suppress them in order to remain England's glorious Virgin Queen, and in the final act, having stifled all human weakness, she appears in all her regal dignity as the Monarch who encourages the playwright to mend his ways and bring fame to his country through his literary pursuits:

> Allons, William, que ma voix t'encourage!
> Allons, mon poète, à l'ouvrage!
> Fais revivre dans tes écrits
> Rois et guerriers de ton pays. (Act III, scene XIII)

The queen's visit to Kenilworth Castle on the invitation of

[3] See F. W. M. Draper, *Rise and Fall of French Romantic Drama*, London, Constable, 1923, p. 113.

her favorite Leicester has become famous in literature through the novel of Sir Walter Scott. When *Kenilworth* appeared in a French translation in 1821, the effect was like wildfire. Balzac in a letter to his sister Laure wrote: "Je t'engage à lire *Kenilworth,* le dernier roman de Walter Scott; c'est la plus belle chose du monde." French dramatists seized upon the material of the novel, almost as soon as it appeared, to find new inspiration for their plays. Almost simultaneously Victor Hugo, Eugène Scribe, Alexandre Soumet, and Boirie, with his collaborator Lemaire, were adapting the novel to the stage.

Scott, availing himself of the *Leicester's Commonwealth* (1584),[4] an infamous libel on Robert Dudley, none of the statements of which deserves credit, made a charming story, compounded of just the proper amounts of thrill and terror. The bare historical facts,[5] pale beside the glowing romance, should be borne in mind, however, to show us once more the "extra-historical" element in most dramas dealing with the Tudor monarchs. Robert Dudley, son of the ambitious Duke of Northumberland, whose part in the Lady Jane Grey affair has already been recounted, married Amy Robsart, daughter of Sir John, in 1550. Upon the accession of Elizabeth, Dudley became a court favorite,[6] and his wife, Amy, retired to Cumnor Place, where two years later she was found dead at the foot of a staircase. According to report, she had fallen downstairs and broken her neck. All kinds of rumors spread at this event—that Leicester's conduct at court had led her to this desperate act, that he had talked of divorcing or poisoning Amy many months before she

[4] Scott used Elias Ashmole's *Antiquities of Berkshire* which gives the facts as in *Leicester's Commonwealth.*

[5] See Hermann Isaac's *Amy Robsart und Graf Leicester,* Berlin, 1882.

[6] Camden, *op. cit.,* p. 44, tells of Elizabeth's favors: "Robert Dudley . . . a man of a flourishing age, and comely Feature of body and lims; whose Father and Grand-father were not so much hated of the people, but he was as much favoured by Queen Elizabeth, through her rare and Royal Clemency, who heaped Honours upon him, saving his life, whose Father would have had her destroyed. Whether this proceeded from any Virtue of his, whereof he gave some shadowed tokens, or from their common condition of Imprisonment under Queen Mary, or from his Nativity and the hidden consent of the Stars at the hour of their Birth, and thereby a most strait conjunction of their Minds, a man cannot easily say."

died. But Elizabeth realized that Dudley's guilt was perhaps exaggerated to keep her from the fatal step of marriage to him, and her favors continued as before. In 1564 she made him Earl of Leicester and gave him the manor of Kenilworth, which the queen visited in 1575 amid costly pageants and elaborate celebrations.

Scott, taking this visit of 1575 as the climax of his story, with a complete disregard for historical facts and dates, shows Amy as still living at the time of the royal visit. He paints a broad historical background into which he brings the courtier Raleigh, the adventurer Michael Lambourne, the astrologer Alasco, and the sharp-witted Dickie Sludge, along with his protagonists: Elizabeth, her favorite Leicester, the faithful Tressilian, Amy Robsart, and the intriguer, Richard Varney. All these characters of another century, strange and alluring to us, fire our imagination, and the past lives again in all its glamour. It was this glowing tableau that caught nineteenth-century authors, moving them to transform the novel into drama.

March 23, 1822, only a few months after *Kenilworth* had appeared in France, the Théâtre de la Porte-Saint-Martin produced the melodrama of Boirie [7] and Lemaire, entitled *Le Château de Kenilworth.*[8] To secure unity of place, the authors show the entire action occurring at Kenilworth rather than divided between Cumnor Place and Kenilworth Castle as in the novel. Since the plot substantially follows that of Scott, an analysis of the drama would be superfluous. The greatest modifications appear in the final act, in Leicester's challenging Tressilian to a duel, followed by a melodramatic reconciliation. Since it is a "mélodrame à grand spectacle", the arrangements for the manner of Amélie's death occupy much of Varney's and Lambourne's attention. The stage-setting at the opening of the act states: "Un escalier tournant communique par un palier aux appartements de l'ancien manoir et domine un affreux précipice.

[7] Eugène Cantiran Boirie (1783-1837) was successively director of the Théâtre des Jeunes Artistes, of the Odéon, and of the Théâtre de la Porte-Saint-Martin. His collaborator Lemaire was a novelist, dramatist, and *moraliste.*

[8] "mélodrame en trois actes à grand spectacle; musique de M. Alexandre; ballet de M. Blache; decors de M. Cicéri." The play was published in Paris the same year by Palet.

Il est soutenu par un énorme pilier qui semble lui servir de pivot." They now remove the chains from the hollow pillar, so that the slightest weight on the platform will cause the support to give way. Leicester's voice heard in the vicinity of her room causes Amélie to rush forth to meet him and so plunge to her death. The queen, Leicester and Tressilian then appear to call down vengeance on Lambourne and Varney. This dénouement is much more melodramatic than the somber tragedy of Cumnor Place as Scott related it.

Boirie and Lemaire keep the characters as they found them in Scott: Amy, the innocent victim; Leicester, the irresolute courtier, torn between his duty to Amy and his ambitions as royal favorite; Varney, the arch-fiend; and Elizabeth, the majestic sovereign with all the grace of a charming woman. They omit the astrologer Alasco and the fantastic Dickie Sludge from their cast.

Eugène Scribe found in Scott's novel a subject for an *opéra comique* which he wrote in collaboration with Mélesville, and for which Auber composed the music. The first performance of *Leicester, ou le Château de Kenilworth* on January 25, 1823, proved popular and was followed by many more. In Scribe's libretto, Amy's attendant, Jenny Foster, becomes Cycili, to whom Raleigh confides his love for Amy Robsart, Raleigh here playing the two rôles of Tressilian and Richard Varney. Old Sir Robsart, Amy's father, is introduced to the castle as a wayfarer whom Leicester has saved from the perils of the highway. Not surmising Sir Robsart's identity, and not daring to keep Amy in dangerous proximity to the queen, whose arrival at Kenilworth is every moment expected, Leicester entrusts his young wife to her father. The queen arrives and the situation grows ever more complicated. Scribe's Elizabeth goes much further than Scott's in proposing marriage to her favorite. Her rage at news of his secret union knows no bounds, but Raleigh, telling of his own love for Amy, so intercedes for the lovers that Elizabeth in the final scene publicly recognizes the marriage of Leicester and his Lady, leaving them to enjoy the bliss of Kenilworth while she returns to London. So complete a recapitulation after so daring an advance on the part of the sovereign seems hardly plausible. Scribe eclipses Sir Walter in romancing history.

So far there had been produced a melodrama and a light opera from *Kenilworth;* in 1827 and 1828 were to come two more adaptations. Early in 1822 Alexandre Soumet and Victor Hugo had begun collaborating on a play to be drawn from the novel, of which Victor Hugo was to write the first three acts and Soumet the last two. The young poet, even at that date imbued with his ideas of the grotesque and the sublime, the comic mingled with the tragic, introduced the innovations into his part of the play. His collaborator Soumet not sharing his views, the two dramatists wisely agreed to separate and each finished his play according to his own tastes. Soumet played his *Emilia* at the Théâtre Français, September 1, 1827. Biré[9] tells that, when Mlle Mars at the rehearsals recited

J'étais Amy (Émy) quand il m'aimait,

everyone laughed, a catastrophe that caused the author to change his heroine's name to Emilia. Of the play, Biré writes:

Grâce au talent de Mlle Mars et à l'intérêt du sujet la pièce de Soumet réussit.[10]

But evidently it did not enjoy enough success to warrant a printing, since Quérard [11] states:

Un drame *Emilia* a été représenté; mais n'ayant obtenu qu'un demi succès il n'a pas été imprimé.

Emmanuel des Essarts, writing in the *Revue Bleue* of September 7, 1901, on Alexandre Soumet, makes no mention of *Emilia;* Anna Beffort in her thesis on Soumet gives no account of it, so that we cannot tell how much this play differed from the other adaptations of *Kenilworth.*

Emilia appeared in 1827; the following February there was played at the Odéon *Amy Robsart,* which has come to be regarded as the first romantic drama. Who had written it? The billboards announced Paul Foucher, the eighteen-year-old brother-in-law of Victor Hugo, as the author. But in his autobiography the great romantic poet recounts how he bestowed on his young relative, ambitious to embark upon a dramatic career, the

[9] Edmond Biré, *Victor Hugo avant 1830,* Paris, Perrin, 1902.
[10] *Op. cit.,* p. 449.
[11] *La France Littéraire,* Paris, Firmin Didot, 1838, vol. IX, p. 230.

manuscript which had been lying neglected in a drawer since the days when he and Soumet had collaborated.[12] Biré sees in this gift only a comfortable cloak for Victor Hugo; in case his drama should fail, his reputation would not suffer. And if it succeeded? But it did not. In spite of the superb stage settings and the costumes designed by the artist, Delacroix, in spite of the excellent actors who played the main rôles, the drama failed miserably, and after one performance, accompanied by much hissing and hooting, it was withdrawn. What could Victor Hugo do now to take some of the disgrace from Paul Foucher's name? Maurice Souriau[13] points out that he could not boldly reveal the authorship:

C'était couler à tout jamais le petit Paul en reconnaissant la supercherie. Il ne pouvait donc avouer qu'une partie de la collaboration, et il le fit avec une véritable générosité prenant à son compte les passages les plus sifflés.[14]

The newspapers showed severity in their criticisms. In the *Journal des Débats* of February 15, 1828, we read:

Amy Robsart, . . . qui, déjà traité sur trois théâtres différents, reparaissait pour la quatrième fois sans autre avantage que d'avoir été allongé outre mesure et déparé par une foule de locutions triviales. Les sifflets et les éclats de rire ont fait justice de cette vieille nouveauté.

The *Moniteur* of the same date complained of lack of originality.

Quel mérite d'originalité y a-t-il à prendre un roman, à le couper en actes et en scènes?

In 1827, when Victor Hugo considered bringing his drama to the stage, he began revising certain scenes. Paul and Victor Glachant[15] have completed the study of Gustave Allais in show-

[12] *Victor Hugo raconté*, Paris, Hetzel, vol. II, p. 236.

[13] *Histoire du Romantisme en France*, Tome Ier, Deuxième partie, la Restauration, Paris, Editions Spes, 1927.

[14] *Op. cit.*, p. 222. Victor Hugo had sent a letter to all the newspapers, in which he wrote:

Puisque la réussite d'*Amy Robsart*, début d'un jeune poète, dont les succès me sont plus chers que les miens, ont éprouvé une si vive opposition, je m'empresse de déclarer que je ne suis pas absolument étranger à cet ouvrage. Il y a dans ce drame quelques mots, quelques fragments de scènes qui sont de moi, et je dois dire que ce sont peut-être ces passages qui ont été le plus sifflés.

[15] *Essai Critique sur le Théâtre de Victor Hugo, Drames en Prose,*

ing the retouchings made to the edition of 1822, but no definite conclusions can be reached, since the manuscript of the play as it was performed in 1828 has been lost and only an approximation of it remains. The revisions of Acts II and IV improve the plausibility of the action,[16] but they are only slight alterations compared with those of the fifth act which change the entire dénouement. The conclusion of 1822 had shown the Castle of Kenilworth consumed in flames, with Alasco and Varney caught between the fire and the trap-door, mocked by little Dickie Sludge (Flibbertigibbet) until the roof caved in upon them. Truly the conclusion of a "mélodrame à grand fracas." M. Allais[17] regrets that Leicester does not appear in the fifth act, to clear himself, as he had done in the novel. According to the approximate manuscript of 1827, Leicester does return, pushes Varney down the trap he has laid for the innocent Amy, and would then precipitate himself to a similar death, were he not prevented by Sir Hugh Robsart and Flibbertigibbet. Conscience-stricken, he cries that he can never forgive himself. This second dénouement, simpler, more logical, and more natural, marks a great improvement over the first draft of the play, but unfortunately it is this superior form that has been lost, and the edition of 1822 is the only printed one.

M. Allais criticises also the obscurity and certain illogical points of the exposition: 1. Amy, residing at Kenilworth instead of at Cumnor Place as in the novel, cannot very well pass as the wife of Varney when everyone knows that the Castle of Kenilworth belongs to Leicester. 2. Victor Hugo omits Tressilian, and shows Varney in love with Amy. The critic considers

Paris, Hachette, 1903. André Pavie in an article in the *Revue Hebdomadaire* of March 14, 1903, thought that *Amy Robsart* might be the work of Paul Foucher since he wrote to Victor Pavie, speaking of it as "mon ouvrage." Paul Foucher may have assisted in the retouchings of 1827, but Victor Hugo had written a complete play in 1822.

[16] The scene of Act II between Leicester and Varney becomes the opening scene of Act III. Varney's persuasions seem more possible if greater time elapses after Leicester's scene with Elizabeth. In Act IV, scene IV, Elizabeth's suspicions appear more clearly.

[17] Gustave Allais wrote a series of articles in the *Revue des Cours et Conférences* of 1902-1903, entitled *Amy Robsart*. The same material is now included in his book entitled *Les Débuts Dramatiques de Victor Hugo*.

this a weak invention since the calculating, unscrupulous Varney has to step out of his one rôle of ambitious egoist to assume the incompatible rôle of lover. Such complexity entails confusion.

Victor Hugo had introduced the characters of Flibbertigibbet and Alasco, present in Scott's novel, but never before brought to the French stage by adaptors. With the rôle of the magician he probably introduced too much melodrama, but with the sharp-tongued Dickie Sludge he gave a new note which the *Globe* of February 20, 1828, commended:

> Enfin il faut tenir compte aux auteurs d'un rôle entier, plein de hardiesse et de gaieté, celui de Flibbertigibbet, qui aurait amusé jusqu'à la fin, si son langage ne fût devenu peu à peu celui de tous les personnages.

But the rôle of Flibbertigibbet proved too tenuous a factor to keep the play from failure, and *Amy Robsart* did little to launch Paul Foucher on his dramatic career. M. Le Breton[18] concludes that Victor Hugo did not benefit his young brother-in-law in the gift of this manuscript:

> Il lui avait fait d'ailleurs un assez méchant cadeau en lui donnant *Amy Robsart*. La pièce n'est qu'un violent mélodrame en prose, et en prose sans beauté.[19]

The first romantic drama enjoyed no glorious career. In 1902, at the celebration of Victor Hugo's centenary, vague suggestions of reviewing *Amy Robsart* were made, but wisely dropped, for theater directors realized that too many alterations and corrections would be required to make a successful presentation of the drama. And therefore, since its first performance in 1828, the play has sunk into deep oblivion.

The last of the direct adaptations of *Kenilworth* came a few years later, in 1840, when Alphonse Vernet played his *Comtesse de Leicester* at the Théâtre du Luxembourg. The first act, at Cumnor Place, closely follows the opening scenes of Scott's novel, showing Tressilian's visit to Amy, Leicester's secret interview with his wife, Varney's influence over the earl in touching the cord of his ambition, and Varney's determined effort to dispose of Amy because she hinders his climbing. The other three acts take place not at Kenilworth, but at Greenwich, the seat

[18] André Le Breton, *La Jeunesse de Victor Hugo*, Paris, Hachette, 1928.

[19] *Op. cit.*, p. 226.

of Elizabeth's court. Varney's attempt to kill Amy by poison, his endeavor to calumniate her because of her interview with Tressilian, the great scene at court before Elizabeth and Leicester—all come directly from the English source. Only in the last act, in the manner of Amy's death, does Vernet depart from the novel. Instead of by the trap-door, Amy dies by poison, which Varney succeeds finally in administering. In the final scene she comes forth, clothed in white, very pale, and haunted by the hallucination of her father's malediction. Borrowing Ophelia's words,[20] she tries to appease her father's spirit with the offer of flowers:

Voilà du romarin, c'est pour le souvenir . . . Je vous en prie, mon père, souvenez-vous de moi . . . Et voici des pensées, pensez à moi . . . Voilà aussi une marguerite . . . Je vous donnerais bien ces violettes; mais elles se sont toutes fanées à votre mort. . . .

The poison has worked completely through her system now, and by the time Leicester and the queen with her attendants reach her cell, she is dying. The curtain falls as all the heads are bowed in acknowledgment of Elizabeth's salutation: "Amy Robsart, Comtesse de Leicester."

A more indirect adaptation of the Kenilworth story comes from the pen of a Belgian author, P. Bergeron, who in his *Comtesse de Leicester*[21] recounts the death, not of Amy Robsart, but of another Countess of Leicester, Robert Dudley's third wife,[22] who before her marriage to him had been the widow of Essex. The enemy working against Leicester is in this case Simier, French envoy, pressing the marriage of Elizabeth and the Duc d'Anjou. Simier, upon discovering the secret marriage of Leicester, reveals the matter to the queen, thus rousing the ire of the monarch and making her break off all relations with her former favorite. Resemblance to the Kenilworth story shows most clearly in the idea of a secret marriage withheld from the knowledge of the queen, and in the person of Morton (like

[20] Cf. *Hamlet*, Act IV, Scene V.

[21] Drame en 5 actes et en vers par P. Bergeron, docteur en philosophie et en lettres, ancien préfet des études, Professeur émérite de l'Université de Bruxelles, chevalier de l'ordre Ernest de Saxe-Cobourg-Gotha. Imprimerie Vanbuggenhaudt, Bruxelles, 1853.

[22] He never acknowledged his marriage to his second wife, Lady Sheffield, contracted in 1571.

Varney), an ambitious young man who wants to rise on his master's fame, and who poisons the poor Countess of Leicester quite as Richard Varney did away with Amy Robsart.

In all the adaptations from *Kenilworth,* Elizabeth remains as Scott pictured her, the gracious queen at the apogee of her youth and brilliance, a noble and majestic sovereign with a most human heart. Louis Maigron[23] comments on her language, natural and picturesque as that of one of her chamber-maids. That naturalness of tone was to affect not only the adaptations from *Kenilworth,* but subsequent romantic dramas as well: *Henri III et sa Cour, Ruy Blas,* and *Le Roi s'amuse.* The story of *Kenilworth* does not need to be exact in its dates and facts to give us a glowing picture of sixteenth-century England and its queen in her resplendent youth.

[23] Louis Maigron, *Le Roman historique à l'époque romantique,* Paris, Champion, 1912, pp. 106-107.

CHAPTER VI

Elizabeth and the Queen of Scots

From the moment of Elizabeth's accession, and throughout a period of thirty years, she suffered as an enemy to her peace, and as a rival to the throne of England, a woman of physical beauty, mental acumen, and stirring passions—her cousin, Mary Stuart. When the Queen of Scots returned from the French court in 1561 to rule in Scotland, she refused to renounce the title of Queen of England and Ireland, which she had assumed on the death of Mary Tudor. From the outset Elizabeth and Mary Queen of Scots clashed: Mary was fickle, passionate, violent, imprudent; Elizabeth was proud, cruel, jealous, clever, and perfidious. Their strong personalities each excited a large following and the ensuing struggle proved a long one. The tragic life of the Queen of Scots has inspired much dramatic literature from the time of her death in 1587 up to the present day, with John Drinkwater's drama of 1921.

But that literature has in most cases followed the legend of Mary Stuart as a weak and voluptuous victim, as a holy martyr, or as a Messalina. Philarète Chasles [1] points out that she is none of these, but rather

> le vrai sang des Guises, l'altière fille de Lorraine, l'élève de Catherine de Médicis, toute ardeur et toute énergie, esclave de son instinct, incapable de dominer sa passion, aveugle en face des obstacles, marchant au précipice, infatigable dans ses intrigues, invincible dans ses entêtements, attrayante, éloquente, vaine, spontanée, intrigante, impérieuse, nouant de sa main la trame qui doit la perdre, voyant l'abîme et s'y lançant, toujours entraînée et entraînante, toujours séduisante et séduite.[2]

Brought up at the French court of Henry II, Mary Queen of Scots was in no way prepared to govern the Scots; her Catholicism jarred the Protestant reforms of Knox; her half-brother, Murray, ambitious to rule the kingdom, gave her all the bad advice he could; her marriage to Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, enraged Elizabeth, who saw in it a plot to seize the English

[1] *Sur W. Shakespeare, Marie Stuart et Arétin*, Paris, Amyot, 1852.
[2] *Op. cit.*, pp. 24-25.

throne; her fatal passion for Bothwell and her knowledge of the vile plot to kill Darnley, followed by her scandalous marriage to Bothwell—all these circumstances excited the Scots to rebel against Mary and imprison her in the Castle of Lochleven, from which she escaped and fled to England. Elizabeth was delighted to get her hands on this enemy and prolonged her trial as long as possible. Mary's long imprisonment, which might have brought her freedom, had she suffered it in silence and renunciation, was turned into a series of attempts to annoy Elizabeth, her jailer, to correspond with the English queen's enemies, and to kindle in the heart of Norfolk a fatal passion. Such conduct at length brought her to the scaffold. Philarète Chasles remarks that if her life had been angelic, if her misfortune had been undeserved, she would have been forgotten like the martyred Jane Grey; on the other hand, if she had had more vice than passion, she would have been allowed to sleep in some black corner of history along with Isabeau, Messalina, and la Brinvilliers. But her distinctly human qualities, her passions, her weakness, appeal to the popular imagination and sympathy. That best explains why Mary Stuart has become an important figure in world literature.

The Queen of Scots had become the hope of the Catholic party in England; her trial excited great turmoil in all Catholic countries, and her execution brought forth a host of books and pamphlets concerning her "martyrdom." Her story immediately roused the interest of French authors and it is a tragedy on her death that gives us, in point of date, the first play regarding the Tudor monarchs in French drama—Antoine de Montchrestien's [3] *l'Escossoise ou le desastre.*[4]

As in the sixteenth-century tragedies, we have no scene divisions, but a chorus, inspired by ancient Greek drama, completes each of the five acts. The tragedy opens with a parley between Elizabeth and her *conseiller,* in which the statesman urges her to execute Mary, dangerous foe and head of many factions:

[3] Antoine de Montchrestien, sieur de Vasteville, (1570?-1621) born at Falaise, adventurer, poet and economist, author of *la Carthaginoise, les Lacènes, David, Aman,* tragedies, and *Traité d'économie politique.*

[4] Called simply *l'Escossoise* in subsequent editions.

C'est piété d'occire vne femme meschante
Aussi bien qu'vn Tyran: de tous deux on sevante.
(Act I, lines 169-170)

Elizabeth raises the arguments of Mary's being a queen, mother of the King of Scotland and the wife of two kings; God alone can judge her case. Elizabeth continues this note of clemency throughout the first act, which ends without any action having been taken to arrest the Queen of Scots. In a meter suited to lyric poetry the chorus sings of the blissful Golden Age contrasted with the gloomy present:

Qui ne preferoit l'heur de ces douces choses
A la pompe des Roys;
Qui ne souhaiteroit cueillir ainsi les roses
Sans se piquer les doigts?

Act II becomes a mere repetition of the opening act, the Chœur des Estats taking the place of the Conseiller in urging Mary's arrest, and Elizabeth still reluctant to take any step against her royal prisoner. A note of more impending danger comes in Act III with Davison's misgivings at the task before him of announcing to Mary the news of her conviction, for between the acts Elizabeth has reached her decision. After this monolog of Davison's the scene shifts to Mary's apartments, where the Queen of Scots, surrounded by her "chœur de damoiselles," tells of her sad life: at the age of seven she left Scotland for France, where she later married the dauphin, Francis II, who, after only a little more than a year of rule, died, leaving her without any special position.[5] Mary returned to Scotland where she found her subjects filled with

La folle opinion d'vne rance hérésie (line 772),

which caused revolts, civil quarrels, and led them to accuse her of killing her husband.[6] She says she fled because she knew

[5] She quarreled with Catherine de Médicis, her mother-in-law, whom, of all people, she should have treated with deference.

[6] Mary apostrophizes her husband to proclaim her innocence:

Peux-tu bien, cher Mary, qui maintenant reposes
Au seiour bien-heureux entendre telles choses?
Peux-tu voir diffamer ta plus chere moitié
Qui mesme apres ta mort vit en ton amitié? (ll. 779-782)

that innocence was no sure defense against the wicked. According to Montchrestien, she had hoped to flee to France,[7] but a storm drove her fleet to the shores of the "barbares Anglois, peuple double et cruel," where she has suffered imprisonment for long years, her only escape from which will come through Death. While her ladies-in-waiting are trying to assure Mary that no such fatal step can be taken against her, a page announces that the council has been sitting and that from their number Davison comes to deliver her death-sentence:

> Pour auoir contre nous fait les Roys entreprendre,
> Fomenté la discorde, ourdi la trahison,
> A nostre bonne Reine attenté par poison,
> R'allumé ça et la les ciuiles querelles,
> Semé des factions et des haines mortelles,
> Resuscité l'ardeur des combats amortis,
> Formé contre l'Estat grand nombre de partis;
> Le conseil vous prononce une telle sentence,
> Loyer bien mérité de vostre griefue offence.
> (Act III, ll. 930-938)

The entire fourth act is Mary's lengthy prayer before death: soliciting God's grace, saying farewell to Scotland, fatal to its princes, and to France, where she wishes to be buried. The chorus sings of man's infelicity on earth; only in heaven can he find happiness. The final act shows us the Maistre d'Hostel[8] mourning over Mary's execution and breaking out into execration against Elizabeth:

> cette Barbare,
> Que le visage seul de ses Ourses separe. (Avt V, ll. 1363-4)[9]

The messenger enters to recount Mary's death: Paulet[10] has conducted her to the scaffold raised in a room draped in black. On the scaffold she has made a speech, saying that she loses one

[7] This is an invention of Montchrestien's, since Mary came voluntarily to England.

[8] Sir James Melville (1535-1617), appointed at the age of fourteen as attendant to Mary at the French court. On her return to Scotland he became her privy councillor.

[9] The one note of violent invective against Elizabeth in the entire tragedy.

[10] Sir Amias Paulet (1536?-1588), in 1585 became keeper of Mary Queen of Scots, watching her correspondence closely. He reported to Walsingham her transactions with members of the Babington plot.

earthly crown to gain two heavenly adornments: the Crown of Life and the Crown of Martyrdom. With courage she has summoned the executioner:

> Il court oyant ces mots se saisir de sa hache;
> Vn, deux, trois, quatre coups sur son col il delasche;
> Car le fer aceré moins cruel que son bras
> Vouloit d'un si beau corps differer le trepas.
> Le tronc tombe a la fin, et sa mourante face
> Par trois ou quatre fois bondit dessus la place
> (Act V, ll. 1507-12)[11]

No play could be less dramatic than Montchrestien's *Escossoise*; the protagonists never meet; Elizabeth appears only in the first two acts; Mary only in Acts III and IV; no important character appears in the last act; Elizabeth's decision regarding her prisoner takes place off stage. Yet, undramatic though it be, we have positive proof that the tragedy was performed at Orléans in April or May of 1603.[12] M. Lanson, in his article on Montchrestien,[13] shows that this author's tragedies do not interest the history of drama since they merely complete the period of men like Jodelle and Garnier, who composed erudite and artificial tragedies. On the other hand, in the history of poetry and language, Montchrestien leaves a real and ineffaceable mark:

> La forme dramatique dont il use n'est qu'un cadre, où il assemble au gré de sa fantaisie des morceaux brillants de poésie et de style. . . . Oubliez que ce sont des tragédies; disloquez, démembrez ces actes et ces scènes. Ce ne sont pas des tableux de la vie humaine, ni des portraits historiques: c'est une âme de poète qui s'ouvre. . . . Montchrétien est un de nos derniers et plus exquis lyriques avant le règne du bon sens éloquent.[14]

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[11] Cf. the execution in La Calprenède's *Ieanne Reyne d'Angleterre* and Buonarelli's *Il Solimano.*

[12] L. Auvray in *Revue d'Histoire littéraire de la France,* 1897, pp. 89-91, publishes a letter of M. de Beauharnois, lieutenant général, written in answer to one by the Chancelier Pomponne de Bellièvre, which gives information of the performance. Frances A. Yates in an article, "New Lights on 'L'Ecossaise' of Antoine de Montchrétien," in the *Modern Language Review* of July 1927 gives further evidence of its performance.

[13] "Antoine de Montchrétien," *Revue des Deux Mondes,* 15 septembre, 1891, pp. 369-387.

[14] *Op. cit.*, pp. 376-378.

Faguet[15] calls Montchrestien an elegiac poet rather than a dramatist, a statement that applies particularly to *l'Escossoise,* where we hear Mary lamenting her wretched existence, praying before her execution, and the chorus bewailing her loss at the conclusion of the tragedy:

> Puisque tant de beautez l'on a veu moissonner,
> Cessez, pauvres mortels, de plus vous estonner
> Si vous ne trouvez rien de constant et durable:
> "De moment en moment on voit tout se changer;
> "La vie est comme vne ombre ou comme vn vent leger,
> "Et son cours n'est à rien qu'à un rien comparable.
> (Act V, ll. 1605-10)

Lanson points out that his verses, though sometimes vigorous like Corneille's, remind one more often of Racine, the Racine of *Esther* and *Bérénice.*[16]

In another article,[17] M. Lanson has made a detailed study of Montchrestien's historical sources for this tragedy, concluding that for the first two acts Montchrestien used sources giving English arguments, and that for the last three acts, he utilized those giving Catholic arguments. His Catholic sources, however, did not lead him to adopt any violent sectarian point of view; Montchrestien omits all exact political interests to compose a tragedy on the inconstancy of fortune and the frailty of royal splendors. His freedom from prejudice in a period when

[15] Emile Faguet, *La Tragédie au XVIe siècle* (1883), Paris, Welter, 1897, p. 340: "Il ne voit dans une tragédie qu'une élégie touchante, mêlée de chœurs."

[16] Lanson, *op. cit.*, p. 379: "Il y a dans les grâces fluides de son style, dans la douce harmonie de son vers, quelque chose d'abandonné et de tendre, qui caresse les sens et va au cœur."

[17] Gustave Lanson, "Les Sources historiques de la 'Reine d'Escosse'", *Revue Universitaire,* 1905, I, pp. 395-408. He states that two works seem necessary as sources: (a) Summarium rationum quibus Cancellarius Angliae et Prolocutor Puckeringius Elisabethae Reginae Angliae persuaserunt occidendam esse Reginam Scotiae Mariam Stuartam. Auctore Romualdo Scoto. Inglostadii 1588. (b) La mort de la Reine d'Ecosse, douairière de France où l'on voit la procédure de son exécution et de ses funérailles. 1588.

Miss Yates would add as another source Pierre Matthieu's *Histoire des derniers troubles de France* (1597). See *Modern Language Review,* July, 1927.

some were calling Elizabeth a Jezebel and a "louve"[18] deserves special note.

In 1639 came another tragedy on this subject entitled *Marie Stuard, reyne d'Escosse*[19] and composed by the dramatist Regnault. We know little of this author beyond the facts that he wrote another drama, *Blanche de Bourbon* (1642) and that Hilarion de Coste in his *Eloges et Vies des Reynes*[20] (edition of 1647) mentions him as "M. Regnault, Parisien." In the "Apologie de la Reyne d'Escosse au lecteur" Regnault shows quite clearly, by the books he mentions, his sympathy for Mary Queen of Scots: Florimond de Rémond's *La Naissance de l'Hérésie,* "qui fit savoir à toute la terre la longue tyrannie d'Elisabeth & la constante patience de Marie"; *Le Martyre de la Reine d'Ecosse* "découvrit la vérité de son histoire, obscurcie par la mechanceté des Puritains qui semoient partout des libelles diffamatoires contre son innocence"; Nicolas Caussin in his *Cour Sainte* and Hilarion de Coste in his *Eloges* tell of the life and death of this great queen "à qui tous les Escrivains ensemble ne reprochent qu'un excès de bonté."

Regnault perceived in the Mary Stuart theme the lack of any dramatic situation, and therefore introduced the Duke of Norfolk,[21] an English noble who aspired to the hand of the Queen

[18] Ascoli, in the appendix of his *La Grande Bretagne devant l'opinion française depuis la Guerre de Cent Ans jusqu'à la fin du XVIe siècle,* Paris, Librairie Universitaire, 1927, prints the following anonymous quatrain regarding Elizabeth:

Anglais, vous dictes qu'entre vous
Un seul Loup vivant on ne trouve:
Non, mais vous avez une Louve
Pire qu'un million de Loups.

[19] *Privilège,* 14 mai, 1638; *achevé d'imprimer,* 29 décembre, 1638; published by Toussaint Quinet, 1639, with an *epistre* to Richelieu who is reported to have wept at the performance.

[20] "M. Regnault, Parisien, a aussi écrit une Tragédie sous le titre de *Marie Stuart* où l'on void les ialousies & les cruautez des Anglois & de leur Reyne, & la bonté de nostre Reyne Marie & de ses serviteurs ou partizans." *Op. cit.,* p. 520.

[21] Thomas Howard, fourth Duke of Norfolk (1536-1572), who had been appointed one of the commissioners to look into the Darnley murder, was flattered at the proposed match with Mary, but the Protestant nobles, fearing Norfolk would become a tool in the hands of Spain, dismissed him from the court and imprisoned him in the Tower, Oct. 8,

of Scots, and who, to win her, entered into Spanish plots for delivering her from prison and putting her on the English throne. By a slight distortion of historical facts, Regnault has Norfolk also play the rôle of a Leicester or an Essex as royal favorite, thus making Elizabeth's jealousy for the pair of lovers serve as a bond of unity to the entire action.

In the opening scene Mary recounts to her suitor the history of her sad life,[22] little knowing that her half-brother, Murray,[23] along with his friend Kent, is even then achieving her ruin by showing forged letters to the English queen which represent herself and Norfolk as plotters for the throne of England. Regnault, by thus portraying the ambitious Murray as a base intriguer, exculpates Mary and Norfolk from all guilt of conspiracy. Queen Elizabeth, stirred at this news of plots against her, decides to destroy the guilty pair:

> Perdons une Princesse avec un favory
> Et par là paressons la fille de Henry. (Act I, scene II)

A third scene was added in the first and third editions of the tragedy, showing Murray and Kent rejoicing over the success of their plot, and exulting in the fact that Murray will soon have his sister's throne in Scotland.

In the second act Elizabeth tells Norfolk of her decision to kill Mary, to which Norfolk objects, because she is a queen, above all judgments of men.[24] Elizabeth then accuses him of his love for Mary, which he admits, and berates him for his inconstancy to herself, warning him that she will seek vengeance; finally she confronts him with the incriminating letters which he declares forged. Angry at Elizabeth's accusations, the Duke,

1569. Norfolk was released in 1570 but drifted again into Spanish conspiracies, for which he was brought to trial and executed June 2, 1572, "to serve as a lesson," Elizabeth said, to the other nobles who were not loyal enough to her.

[22] The French poet Jean de la Taille had made anagrams of her name: Marie Stuart—"tu as martire"; "tu te mariras."

[23] James Stuart, Earl of Murray (Moray) (1531?-1570), natural son of James V of Scotland by Lady Margaret Erskine. He became regent after the murder of Darnley, and was killed in January, 1570, by James Hamilton.

[24] At Elizabeth's insistence Norfolk desperately cries:

> Que tu feras parler les théâtres de nous. (Act II, scene II)

when left alone, swears to retaliate by actually entering into a conspiracy against her, but Mary, when told of the plan, bids him temper his wrath. In Mary's presence Norfolk is arrested by Murray at Elizabeth's order, and, in Act III, he is led before his judges over whom Murray presides.[25] Since the Estats (reminiscent of Montchrestien's *Escossoise*) have already, at Murray's instigation, decided on conviction, the whole trial becomes a mere farce. Mary, at news of her lover's execution, falls in a faint and, on recovering consciousness, begs that she too may die.

Regnault has so far pictured the events of the year 1572; he now bridges a period of seventeen years and in the last two acts of his tragedy combines events of 1572 and 1587, the year of Mary's execution. The fourth act opens with Kent's report that Murray has been killed in a counter-revolution which Norfolk's execution has incited. Elizabeth at this news decides to spare the Queen of Scots, but, when Kent emphasizes the danger of Mary's remaining the center of plots if she is allowed to live, Elizabeth yields to his reasoning.

The scene now shifts to Mary's apartments, draped in black, where Mary tells her attendant of a dream she has had. Her speech, in the first edition of the play, sounded more like that of a pagan than a Christian:

> Les prestres étonnez par un facheux auspice,
> (Ce me semble) ont quitté le divin sacrifice;
> Et pour m'assurer mieux de mes derniers malheurs
> La statue ebranlée a repandu des pleurs.
> Le temple en a gemy, plusieurs coups de tonnerre
> Sous mes piez chancelans ont fait trembler la terre;
> Du sang a reiailly de l'autel sous mes mains
> Et les flambeaux sacrez trois fois se sont estains.
> (Act IV, scene II)

The Frères Parfaict[26] in their discussion of this tragedy ob-

[25] The rôle which Regnault makes Murray play in this affair is entirely unhistorical. Murray, of course, never had such influence in England and he died in 1570, before Norfolk was committed to the Tower a second time.

[26] *Histoire du Théâtre François*, vol. VI, p. 58: "Marie se résout à une mort qui lui paraît inévitable, et dont elle assure avoir les présages certains. On jugera si les discours que l'Auteur lui fait tenir alors, ne

jected to such utterances from a Christian princess, and evidently Regnault himself judged them unseemly since they do not appear in the third edition of 1640.

In Act V we witness Elizabeth's hesitancy at taking the fatal step of condemning her prisoner; irresolute, she is on the point of pardoning Mary when ambassadors from Scotland and France [27] arrive to plead for the sentenced queen in the name of all European monarchs. Elizabeth replies that she too has decided on clemency but fears that her reversal of the sentence may come too late, as indeed it does, for at that moment the courtiers enter to tell of Mary's death. Melvin (Melville) gives an account of the execution [28] which reminds one quite strikingly of Montchrestien's *Escossoise* and La Calprenède's *Ieanne Reyne d'Angleterre*:

> Desia le bras se lève, & sa teste frappée
> Par trois diverses fois ne peut estre couppée
> . . . . . .
> La teste qui bondit donne de l'épouvante
> Murmurant certains mots dans sa bouche mourãte
> Nous les avons ouys avec étonnement
> Elle a dit a nos piez, ie meurs innocemment.
> (Act V, scene IV)

Contrite at this narrative, Elizabeth orders that the lovers be buried in a single grave [29] and that everyone celebrate their great love. In the third edition, after Elizabeth's last speech, le Vicomte Herrin, a partisan of Mary's, says of Elizabeth:

> Son deuil est excessif comme il est légitime,

---

seraient pas mieux placés dans la bouche d'une Payenne très superstitieuse que dans celle d'une princesse instruite de la vraie Religion."

[27] The French King, Henry III, sent Pomponne de Bellièvre as ambassador extraordinary to deter Elizabeth's actions by his "Harangue . . . faicte à la Royne d'Angleterre pour la desmouvoir de n'entreprendre aucune juridiction sur la Royne d'Escosse"; published in 1588.

[28] Regnault becomes rather précieux at times; his line:

> Le fer rougit de honte à ce coup violent (Act V, scene IV)

recalls the famous quotation from Théophile de Viau's *Pyrame:*

> Ha! voici le poignard qui du sang de son maistre
> S'est souillé laschement; il en rougit le traistre.
> (Act V, scene II)

[29] Vous n'eustes qu'une mort, vous n'aurez qu'un tombeau. (Act V, scene IV)

to which the French ambassador replies:

Il ne sera iamais aussi grand que son crime.[30]

The third edition makes, in general, the changes which give more unity to the entire play: certain scenes are combined, the grotesque speeches and mythological allusions excised, and the tragedy markedly improved by the revisions. In the *Au Lecteur* Regnault writes of his work in what Kipka [31] has characterized as the self-satisfied tone of a youthful author:

Quoy que ie me sois attaché particulierement à la matiere, i'ay disposé mon Poëme en telle sorte qu'il ne faut que l'ouyr ou le lire pour le comprēdre. Les recits y sont en leur lieux, tu n'y trouueras point de liaisons superfluës, ny d'Episodes qui n'y soient nécessaires, les actions faites auparavant la Scene y sont racontées sans aucune alteration ou déguysement de la vérité de mon subiet.

Regnault shows a somewhat more partisan picture than did Montchrestien of this event. Very evidently his sympathies lie with the beautiful Queen of Scots whom he makes entirely innocent of all complicity in the Darnley murder; he does not so much as mention the name of Bothwell. Mary's insistence on her innocence descends almost to the ridiculous in the scene of her preparation for death when, in addressing her "chers Epoux," she looks forward to a reunion with each of them in the next world. In making Mary an innocent martyr,[32] Regnault blackens her natural brother Murray, showing him guilty of the lowest deceit in order to satisfy his personal ambitions.[33] For

[30] This ending resembles the conclusion of Tristan l'Hermite's *Mariane* (1637).

[31] Karl Kipka, *Maria Stuart im Drama der Weltliteratur vornehmlich des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts*, Leipzig, 1907, p. 213, appearing in *Breslauer Beiträge zur Literaturgeschichte*, vol. IX.

[32] An epigram of Rotrou to Regnault on his tragedy, printed in the edition of 1639, shows a similar conception of Mary:

Regnault, quand cette grande Reyne
Vid finir sa vie & sa peyne
Toute l'Europe en murmura.
Cette mort (disoit on) est iniuste & cruelle,
Mais depuis tu l'as faite si iuste & si belle,
Que mesme en la pleignant chacun l'approuvera.

[33] Le père Caussin in his chapter on Mary Stuart in *La Cour Sainte* had given a very black picture of Murray.

this dramatist, Elizabeth remains antipathetic; in the cast of characters he calls her "fille naturelle de Henri VIII," and Mary, in this same list, called "légitime heritiere d'Angleterre," later heaps reproaches upon Elizabeth's birth:

> Car on a remarqué qu'un lit incestueux
> N'a pu jamais produire un enfant vertueux.
> (Act IV, scene IV)[34]

Yet Regnault for the most part avoids violent invective against the Tudor queen; he represents her as a woman hesitating in her action, rather than as the wild she-wolf thirsting for innocent blood, that the Catholic historians had portrayed[35] Unfortunately he shows no meeting of the two monarchs, whereby we might contrast their characters. Mary remains entirely passive throughout the tragedy, doing nothing to shape the dramatic events and taking no active step in her own downfall; such passivity makes the tragedy undramatic, for after the execution of Norfolk one feels that the doom of the Queen of Scots is sealed.

Regnault, with his portrayal of Elizabeth's jealousy for the pair of lovers, pointed the way to many subsequent dramatists for this same triangle.[36] In 1683 Edme Boursault produced *Marie Stuard, Reine d'Ecosse,*[37] in which Norfolk actually enters into a conspiracy to save Mary, and as in Regnault's tragedy, becomes ensnared in Murray's plots so that he loses his own life. Murray's accomplice, Kent, is here replaced by the Earl of Newcastle, who has formerly served Norfolk, but who sees greater power for himself in turning to Murray's side, and therefore tempts Norfolk into extravagant projects, all of which he later divulges to Murray. Mary's bastard brother here appears more ambitious than ever, having pretensions not only to the Scottish throne, but also to that of England by marriage with Elizabeth.

[34] Another echo of Sanders' tale, mentioned in the chapter on Henry VIII.

[35] Cf. Adam Blackwood, *Martyre de la Royne d'Escosse, douairiere de France,* Edinburg, 1587, p. 436: "Cette tigresse transportée de rage & de furie . . . elle n'a peu contenir sa gloutonnie insatiable, qu'elle ne se soit rassasiée du sang innocent."

[36] Kipka, *op. cit.*, p. 211, shows that it served also as a model for Spanish and Italian tragedies.

[37] *Achevé d'imprimer,* le 20 novembre, 1691, published by Jean Guignard at Paris.

The Tudor monarch, learning of Norfolk's love for Mary, becomes enraged at this betrayal of her affections and when she finds that no promises of power and prestige will bring her lover back to her, she has no other thought than to destroy him. Surprising him in his enterprise to free Mary, she imprisons both lovers, then tries once more to regain her hold on the Duke by offering him a share in her kingdom. The astonished woman cannot understand Norfolk's constancy to the Queen of Scots:

> Elle le fait mourir: et je l'aurais fait Roy,
> Si ce qu'il sent pour elle, il l'eût senti pour moy.
> (Act IV, scene III)

The last act seems weak in Elizabeth's vacillation between saving now Norfolk, now Mary. Only after the death of both does she penetrate Murray's plots and break out in maledictions against the

> Monstre que dans ces lieux les Enfers ont vomy.

The bastard boldly retorts that chance alone makes Elizabeth successful and himself a failure; and before he can be seized, he thrusts a dagger into his breast. The tragedy closes with Elizabeth's mourning over the hapless victims:

> Heros trop malheureux! trop malheureuse Reine!
> Victimes tout ensemble & d'amour & de haine
> Ne me reprochez point vostre injuste trépas:
> Vous goûtez d'un repos dont je ne jouis pas.
> (Act V, scene VII)

Mary remains the same passive character seen previously in the tragedies of Montchrestien and Regnault, and again the two queens do not confront each other. Mary's execution, as in the preceding dramas, enjoys a lengthy description, with the same story of the bouncing head:

> Deux fois sur l'Echaffaut la teste bondissante
> A repeté deux fois qu'elle estoit innocente.
> (Act V, scene V)

Norfolk becomes more clearly in this play the constant lover of tragi-comedy, who cherishes only the safety of his lady no matter what be the cost to himself. At the very outset he speaks harshly against Elizabeth:

> Il faut prés de la Reine estre flateur & traistre:
> Jusqu'icy tout mon crime est de n'avoir pû l'estre;

. . . . . .
Depuis qu'Elisabeth regne sur les Anglois
L'injustice triomphe & fait taire les loix. (Act I, scene II)

He speaks bitterly of her treatment of the Queen of Scots:

La fiere Elisabeth, Princesse illegitime
Qui n'eût point veu le jour sans le secours d'un crime,
Peut-elle assujetir la Majesté des Rois
A l'indigne rigueur de ses injustes loix? (*ibid.*)

From these speeches we get certainly a most unfavorable picture of her government. Murray gives an indication of the Tudor queen's fame at least:

A tous les Rois voisins elle impose des loix:
Etonne l'univers du bruit de ses Exploits;
L'Ecosse ou je commande, unie à l'Angleterre,
Je ne craindrois au plus qu'un éclat du Tonnerre.
(Act I, scene III)

From the preface [38] of the tragedy one gathers that Boursault favors the Scottish sovereign. He tells the story of Elizabeth's having sent Mary on her coming to England a diamond in the shape of a heart,[39] as a token of her affection, and adds that the diamond heart "fut moins une marque de son amitié qu'un presage de la dureté du sien." But as Kipka remarks,[40] this hard-heartedness does not often find expression in the tragedy, which remains a love-drama, free from political and religious motives. One readily sees the similarity of this tragedy with the situation in the seventeenth-century plays dealing with the Earl of Essex, which will receive consideration in the succeeding chapter.

The Mary Stuart theme had long been a subject for dramas in the Jesuit schools at Prague and Krems; in 1689 it became the subject for a tragedy at the Collège d'Harcourt in Paris, announced as a "tragédie qui sera representée en vers latin et françois pour la distribution des prix; le mercredi troisiéme d'Aoust à midy." [41] In the cast of characters, under each his-

[38] A dedication of the tragedy to le duc de Saint Aignan.

[39] Blackwood in his *Martyre de la Royne d'Escosse*, p. 50, and Florimond de Rémond in his *Naissance de l'Hérésie*, p. 1135, tell of Mary's having sent this stone to Elizabeth on her return to Scotland.

[40] *Op. cit.*, pp. 221-222.

[41] Published in Paris by Jean de Laulne, 1689.

torical personage appears the name of the pupil taking that part, and from this list we learn that Jean-Baptiste Racine, eldest son of the great dramatist, played the rôle of the villain Murray in the French performance. In a foreword we find this statement:

> Le sujet de cette tragédie, tiré de Camden & de Florimond de Remont, est si connu de tout le monde, qu'il seroit inutile d'en faire une longue explication.

Only a résumé of the French play exists, but from that one can see that in general it follows Regnault's in introducing Murray and Norfolk. Many other nobles receive rôles: the Scotch lords Argathel and Hontley, and the English nobles Lidington and Cecil—probably to give as many students as possible a part in the performance. Mary and Elizabeth are the only women characters. Again we find the Mary-Elizabeth-Norfolk love complication, the Murray plot with Morton playing the rôle of Kent, the farce trial, the death of Murray at the beginning of Act IV with Morton then taking his place to urge Mary's execution. Before the execution of the Queen of Scots, it is stated that "Marie reçoit en songe par la vue de l'ombre de Norfoc des presentiments de sa mort." Elizabeth in the last act, has a softening of heart and would spare the Queen of Scots, but again the word arrives too late, and the play ends with Elizabeth's remorse. From this brief summary one can see that the tragedy is a reworking of all Regnault's material to adapt it for the performance of a boys' school. The ten-year-old Racine must have made a most diverting villain.

The following year, 1690, an anonymous author composed a three-act tragedy, entitled *Marie Stuart, Tragédie avec des intermèdes en musique.* The play, in manuscript at the Bibliothèque Nationale (ms. 25506), has been printed in part by Kipka in the second appendix of his work;[42] since the manuscript is inaccessible to me, I follow his analysis and the excerpts he has printed. Davison rather than Norfolk appears in the rôle of lover, but since Mary is here represented as a Christian martyr removed from all earthly desires, she repulses all his efforts to free her from prison and heroically faces the extreme penalty:

[42] *Op. cit.*, pp. 387-390.

Cette captivité que tu trouves pesante
Ne fut jamais pour moi que douce et bienfaisante
Par elle aux soins du Ciel j'ai remis tout mon sort.
Je lui dois le mépris des horreurs de la mort;
Je lui dois le mépris de tous les biens du monde,
D'ont elle m'a fait voir la misère profonde,
Et je lui dois encore un don plus précieux,
L'impatient désir du royaume des cieux. (Act I, scene II)

Elizabeth, too, remains shadowy in delineation. The two queens have an interview at Fotheringay—the setting of the whole tragedy—but beyond Elizabeth's accusing her of plots and Mary's declaring herself innocent, the scene has little interest.

In the interludes figure allegorical characters: Envy and Imposture sing against Virtue and Innocence; Innocence and Justice lament the triumph of crime, but resign themselves with the consolation that

Il faut vouloir ce que le Ciel ordonne
Puisque les maux et les douleurs
Sont pour une ame autant de fleurs
Dont le Ciel qui l'attend luy fait une couronne.
(Intermède du 2e acte)

In the last interlude, while Imposture and Envy are rejoicing over the evil they have accomplished, Eternel Justice orders them to Hell; then thinking of a better work for them, bids them enter the heart of Elizabeth:

Qu'elle souffre à jamais une douleur cruelle,
Pendant que sa rivale, encor cent fois plus belle
Qu'elle ne parut à ses yeux,
Va sur la Terre et dans les Cieux
Jouir d'une gloire immortelle.

The Queen of Scots at her execution states that she will be the last victim of

l'exécrable hérésie,
Monstre né de l'orgueil et de l'hypocrisie.

Kipka sees in this last act an allusion to the religious policies of the period:[43] James II of England, driven out by William of Orange, had fled to France in 1688 and received aid from Louis XIV, whose Catholic tendencies had recently grown more

[43] *Op. cit.*, pp. 235-6.

pronounced under the influence of Madame de Maintenon. The author of this tragedy perhaps saw here an opportunity to thank the French monarch for his Catholic policy.

* * *

For almost a half-century no play on Mary Stuart appeared; then in May, 1734, at the Théâtre Français and in November of the same year, before the King at Fontainebleau,[44] was performed a *Marie Stuart* by an author who kept his name from the public. The young dramatist, François Tronchin,[45] belonging to the well-known family of Geneva, whose Calvinistic teachings frowned upon the theater, deemed it wise to withhold his name from the theater announcements as well as from the first publication.[46] Tronchin's tragedy marks an epoch in the Mary Stuart compositions since he makes Elizabeth the protagonist. In the *avertissement* he writes:

Mon intention auroit été bien mieux remplie si cette tragédie au lieu du nom de *Marie Stuart* avoit pu porter celui d'*Elizabeth*. Blessé de voir cette grande Princesse peu ressemblante dans les pièces où elle est introduite (he mentions in a note those of Montchrestien, Regnault, and Boursault), j'ai cherché à la peindre d'après elle-même: &, si je ne l'ai fait servir que d'instrument à une action principale, c'est faute d'avoir trouvé un événement de sa vie qui pût attirer sur elle cet intérêt capital qui fait l'essence & le succès de ce genre de poëme.

He goes on to say that Thomas Corneille in his *Comte d'Essex*

[44] Confusion has arisen regarding the performances at Paris and the one before the King at Fontainebleau. Clarence D. Brenner in *L'Histoire nationale dans la tragédie française au 18e siècle*, University of California Publications in Philology, vol. XIV, no. 3, 1929, p. 226, erroneously states that there existed two separate plays, one by Tronchin, and the other by Lefranc de Pompignan.

[45] François Tronchin (1704-1798) was a brother of the financier, Robert Tronchin, and a cousin of the *procureur général*, Jean Robert Tronchin, and of the famous Doctor Théodore Tronchin. All his ancestors had showed themselves good Calvinists. Young François Tronchin came to Paris, where he frequented the salon of Madame de Tencin along with Fontenelle and Montesquieu. He later became the friend of Diderot, Voltaire, and Grimm.

[46] Paris, Prault, 1735. Tronchin went back to Geneva and became a lawyer, but in the latter part of his life published *Mes Récreations dramatiques*, Geneva, Bonnant, 1779-1784, 5 vols., in 8°. The collection contains eight original tragedies and twelve others, reworkings of those of Pierre Corneille, Rotrou, and Du Ryer.

had made such an excellent play that he dared not treat that theme again, and, in perusing Elizabeth's life, he found only the Mary Stuart incident aside from the Essex episode that deserved treatment. But here again he fell into difficulties: he could not portray Mary Stuart charged with all the crimes of which history convicts her, lest that picture alienate all sympathies from her; on the other hand, he could not represent her free from all guilt, lest the rôle of Elizabeth become too odious:

Marie Stuart sera, si l'on veut, un caractère d'invention; moyennant qu'Elisabeth en soit un d'après nature, j'aurai rempli mon objet: & j'aime mieux qu'on me reproche d'avoir embelli Marie Stuart que si l'on avoit à me reprocher d'avoir enlaidi Elisabeth. Peut-être eût-il été plus moral que l'une, chargée de crimes, intéressât moins en sa faveur; & que l'autre, en ne faisant que se garantir des piéges qu'on lui dresse, n'écartât pas d'elle la pitié qu'elle mérite.

The tragedy opens with a conversation between Elizabeth and her councillors, in which the queen describes her prosperous rule:

Tous les rois, contemplant mes succès glorieux,
Pour apprendre à régner fixent sur moi leurs yeux;
Et, par ma politique utile à l'Angleterre,
J'ai su porter mon nom jusqu'aux bouts de la terre.
(Act I, scene I)

Now what shall she do with the prisoner, Mary Stuart? Cecil advises execution, while Leicester objects that other countries will reproach Elizabeth for such an act, and that Scotland should serve as Mary's judge of her crimes; Elizabeth should make a treaty with Mary, disarm her of power and so conquer her without bloodshed. Cecil, when left alone with Elizabeth, shows her the danger of such a policy and discloses to the sovereign his suspicions of Leicester's love for the Queen of Scots. Cecil makes these disclosures because he sees in them a means of rousing Elizabeth's jealousy against Leicester, his most powerful rival at court.

Norfolk, too, plays a rôle in this tragedy, but no longer the position between Elizabeth and Mary (here played by Leicester). In this instance, he stands only as the lover of the Queen of Scots, working for her rescue and for the death of Elizabeth. Leicester's sovereign sees through his plans of winning Mary and

therefore, to take away all chance of his making any appeal to the royal prisoner, she gives him the task of punishing Norfolk:

> S'il peut faire tomber Norfolck en mon pouvoir,
> De plaire à son amante il s'ôte tout espoir.
> (Act II, scene VII)

Moreover, Leicester's prestige at court must serve to check Cecil's power:

> Cécil, dans mon conseil, eût pris trop de pouvoir:
> Un rival de grandeur le tient dans son devoir:
> Opposés l'un à l'autre, ils s'éclairent sans cesse:
> Par chacun d'eux instruite; & de tous deux maîtresse
> Je vois tout: &, tenant une balance entr'eux,
> Ma politique ainsi m'assure de tous deux. (*ibid.*)

Elizabeth remains the crafty sovereign who plays one courtier against another: unblinded by any amorous weakness, she becomes no one's dupe. Leicester, who, through Melvil [47] has learned of Norfolk's plot, now finds himself, charged with this new duty in a precarious position. Deciding finally to sacrifice everything to his love for Mary, he promises the Queen of Scots he will save Norfolk's life on the condition that she will banish him from her heart—which Mary, of course, refuses to do. Elizabeth now summons Mary before her, accuses her of complicity in plots, and bids her not to show herself too haughty, since she has a chance of saving her life if she will deliver up Norfolk. The Scottish queen's refusal grows into a defiance of Elizabeth's authority:

> Autant que je l'ai pu, je vous ai fait la guerre.
> J'ai voulu vous détruire, & venger l'Angleterre;
> Je le voudrois encor si je pouvois agir,
> Pour l'affranchir d'un joug dont elle doit rougir.
> (Act IV, scene II)

The concluding act resembles a romantic tragedy of many external events in its depiction of the tragic end of the constant lovers, Mary and Norfolk.

Cecil and Dudley, while they have no major part in the plot, serve as good background for Elizabeth's court, showing the

[47] Tronchin makes Melvil (Melville) responsible for reporting the conspiracy. But historically Melville was ever a staunch supporter of Mary.

sovereign's political perspicacity. Tronchin makes Elizabeth a majestic, clear-sighted woman, advancing against Mary, not because they are rivals in love, and not for religious differences, but because their political views clash. Tronchin brings to the French stage a more historical Elizabeth in this affair with Mary Queen of Scots than any dramatist had yet contributed.

That the play enjoyed a successful performance at Fontainebleau, we know from a letter addressed to Tronchin by one of his friends:

> Il était dix heures quand je sortis de la salle à cause du grand monde qu'il y avait. Le Roi y fut pendant tout le spectacle. Tous les spectateurs paraissaient fort contents et fort touchés, surtout au cinquième acte. La Reine et les autres dames se servirent du mouchoir . . .[48]

Another Mary Stuart tragedy following the classical rules was written in the latter part of the eighteenth century, but it did not come to the public until 1820,[49] about the time of Lebrun's. The obscure author, Doigny du Ponceau,[50] writes in his *avertissement* that thirty years previously he had enjoyed the success of having his tragedy accepted by the Comédie Française, but that the *ministre de la police* had forbidden its performance; for this reason he is publishing the tragedy:

> Il ne me reste d'autre ressource que de porter mon faible ouvrage au tribunal du public, notre juge en dernier ressort.

With Doigny du Ponceau's tragedy we return to the Norfolk story of Regnault and Boursault, with Elizabeth prompted by sentiments of jealousy and vengeance.[51] Walsingham takes the rôle of Tronchin's Cecil in urging Mary's execution on the

[48] Quoted from H. Tronchin, *Le Conseiller François Tronchin*, Paris, Plon-Nourrit, 1895, p. 203.

[49] *Marie Stuard, Reine d'Ecosse*, Paris, Bouchet, 1820. The author dedicates his tragedy to a friend, saying: "C'est à vous, mon Ami, que j'adresse cette Tragédie de Marie Stuard, presque aussi malheureuse que l'héroïne dont elle retrace la destinée, puisqu'elle n'a pu obtenir les honneurs de la représentation."

[50] Doigny du Ponceau (1750-1830), poet and dramatist, who founded with La Harpe and Vauxcelles, *la Quotidienne;*. his *Œuvres Complètes* were published in Paris, 1826, 4 vols, in-8°.

[51] "Ce Norfolck que je hais—(à part), que malgré moi j'adore."
(Act I, scene III)

grounds of complicity in French [52] and Spanish plots. When Mary receives a letter from the conspirators regarding the plan for Elizabeth's destruction, she is tempted at first to keep it, then, after a short struggle, resolves to carry it to the queen. Elizabeth, meanwhile, offers Norfolk her throne—the throne at which all monarchs marvel:

> Dans mon siècle étonné l'on ne compte qu'un Roi,
> Et ce titre, Norfolck, il n'appartient qu'à moi.
> (Act III, scene II)

But when she learns of his unfailing loyalty to Mary and that he prefers wretchedness with the Queen of Scots to fame and power with herself, she vows she will thwart all the plans of Spain and Rome. Walsingham's presenting her a letter pointing to Mary's guilt determines her course of action. The thought of judging a queen, however, troubles her:

> Tout, malgré mon pouvoir, de trouble m'environne.
> Je crains ma prisonnière et tremble sur mon trône.
> (Act IV, scene II)

Yet, in spite of momentary qualms, she allows Mary's trial and execution to take place. Norfolk arrives too late to explain that the letter accusing Mary of complicity was the very letter which she had endeavored to bring before Elizabeth. In somber tone he reminds his sovereign that in this same Tower her mother Anne Boleyn, though innocent, was put to death:

> Comme Stuard des lois l'innocente victime—
> Et sa fille en ces lieux commet le même crime!
> (Act V, scene V)

Reviling Elizabeth, he thrusts a dagger into his breast, and the Tudor queen is left alone to rue her actions:

> C'est moi que tu punis. O Ciel! cache mes pleurs;
> Que je puisse en secret dévorer mes douleurs.
> (Act V, scene V)

Beyond doubt, Doigny du Ponceau intended to make Mary inno-

[52] Cf. Camden, *op. cit.*, p. 377: "L'Aubespine, the French Embassadour Leiger in England, a man wholly devoted to the Guisian Faction, supposing it the best way to provide for the captive Queen's Safety and Preservation, not by Arguments, but by underhand Practices and Artifices, tampered about taking away Queen Elizabeth's life."

cent.[53] Concerning her former crimes, and especially the Darnley murder, she excuses herself:

> Murrai commit le crime, et j'en subis l'affront.
> (Act II, scene I)

This play gives us a quite satisfactory meeting of the queens, who forget their royal dignity to let fly their women's tongues: Mary insists that she should be treated as a queen, to which Elizabeth replies that queens who murder their husbands forfeit special privileges; Mary retorts that Elizabeth's authority is tenuous since she can claim only an uncertain kinship to Henry VIII. Although the author states in his preface that he owes nothing to Schiller,[54] one notes a strong resemblance in this scene of the royal interview.

Doigny du Ponceau evidently considers his tragedy entirely classical in form since he writes:

> Je fais des vœux pour que les Français restent fidèles à l'école de Racine, hors de laquelle, dit Voltaire, il n'y a point de salut.

One sees rather, I should say, in this tragedy, a trend toward the more popular drama of the period—lost letters, false reports, a change of stage-setting—these elements do not constitute the tragedy of Racine.

Another tragedy, written before 1813 but not published until 1820, appeared under the initials J. V. In the preface the author says that, had Lebrun's adaptation of Schiller appeared earlier, he would probably not have been tempted to write his tragedy, but that he had already finished it when Madame de Staël called attention to Schiller's work. The drama takes place in Mary's prison near London. In this tragedy Norfolk's son Arundel[55] plays the rôle that Norfolk has played in preceding

[53] "Pour justifier Marie Stuart des reproches qu'on lui fait je renvoie le lecteur à l'excellent plaidoyer qu'a fait, pour la cause de cette Reine le sage auteur de *La Rivalité de la France et de l'Angleterre.*" This history, by Gabriel-Henri Gaillard (1726-1806) appeared in 1771-1777.

[54] "Je n'ai rien emprunté à Schiller dont j'ignorais alors l'existence."

[55] Philip Howard, earl of Arundel (1557-1595), son of Thomas Howard, fourth Duke of Norfolk, and grandson, on his mother's side, of the Arundel who took the side of Mary Tudor in the Lady Jane Grey affair. Because of his Catholic leanings, the Jesuits tried to draw him and Northumberland into a pact with the Duke of Guise to free Mary Queen

productions; in Act I he faces the problem: Shall he, in the Council that will try Mary, vote for her freedom, thus incurring his own death, or shall he condemn her, and in so doing apparently approve his father's execution, thus causing a break with his own family? Promising Cecil that in the vote he will remain faithful to Elizabeth, he actually does exactly the opposite, and stands as the only member of the Council to vote for Mary's acquittal, thus calling down upon himself the wrath of his sovereign. The French ambassador, Bellièvre, also figures in the tragedy, bringing Henry III's offer of an asylum in France for Mary. Cecil is here again the intransigent enemy of the Queen of Scots, but the author makes it clear that the wily statesman assumes this attitude only for the sake of winning Elizabeth's favor. Mary, convicted in the Council, receives pardon from Elizabeth and permission to leave for France, but, feeling that this liberty is unaccompanied by dignity, she refuses to leave the country without first answering the charges brought against her; Elizabeth, driven into a fury at this further manifestation of Mary's pride, whirls out of the room to sign the prisoner's death-warrant—a weak motive for so momentous an action. The concluding act shows Mary's preparations for death; she begs her trusty Melvil to go to her son in Scotland and bid him pardon Elizabeth for her death, if he is one day to reign in England. After her execution young Arundel, accusing Cecil of entire responsibility for Mary's condemnation, kills his enemy, then stabs himself, leaving Elizabeth to regret the disaster:

> Plus de repos pour moi! Je suis donc condamnée,
> Marie, à t'envier toujours ta destinée? (Act V, scene X)

As in Doigny du Ponceau's play, we find an antagonistic tone toward Elizabeth voiced in the preface:

> Toutefois les crimes que l'ambition arrache même à des cœurs qui ne sont pas dépourvus de tout noble sentiment, ne peuvent être trop souvent présentés aux réflexions des hommes, pour leur en inspirer l'horreur. Cette pensée fit naître cet Ouvrage, et me détermine encore aujourd'hui à le livrer à l'impression.

In the same preface the author states that his tragedy, when

of Scots. In 1585 he tried to flee from England but was captured and imprisoned in the Tower where he spent the remainder of his life.

read by the committee of the Comédie Française, had received certain "observations" which he has endeavored in his revision to turn to account. Although the modern reader does not know what were the suggestions, he doubts the author's having accomplished all he could have done to make the play unified and dramatic, to give a clear delineation of character, or to present an imperative reason for Mary's death.

* * *

During the Empire the German literature of the late eighteenth century had gradually penetrated into France and Schiller [56] especially had become known through Benjamin Constant's translation of *Wallenstein* (1809), through a production of the *Brigands,* and through Madame de Staël's general study, *De l'Allemagne* (1810-13), in which she gives a long and enthusiastic analysis of *Marie Stuart* (1800).[57] That tragedy was soon to become the theme for a host of French adaptations, the first of which in point both of date and of excellence was composed by Pierre Antoine Lebrun.[58] He had written the tragedy as early as 1816 and read it in the salon of Madame de Staël, but through many postponements the first performance did not take place until March 6, 1820, at the Théâtre Français, where it caused a furor.[59] Lebrun in his preface frankly admits that he owes his tragedy to Schiller, that scarcely a scene of his but comes from the German original, and that he has merely adapted it to the French theater in attempting to reconcile the classical and romantic characteristics:

Quel que soit le jugement que l'on porte de cette pièce peut-être me saura-t-on gré d'avoir essayé un rapprochement entre la Melpomène étrangère et la nôtre; d'avoir opéré l'alliance de deux muses qui

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[56] For a complete study of Schiller's influence in France see Edmond Eggli, *Schiller et le Romantisme français,* Paris, Gamber, 1927, 2 vols.

[57] Madame de Staël, *Œuvres Complètes,* Paris, Firmin Didot frères, 1845, pp. 92-99.

[58] For a complete account of Lebrun's life and work see Herc Szwarc, *Un Précurseur du romantisme: Pierre Lebrun (1785-1873)*, thèse de docteur de l'Université, Dijon, 1928.

[59] Cf. Szwarc, *op. cit.*, p. 38: "Cette représentation fait grand bruit dans la capitale: on s'arrache le livre, *Marie Stuart* devient à la mode comme autrefois *Werther:* on porte le chapeau *Marie Stuart;* on peint des enseignes *A Marie Stuart.*"

sembloient ennemies irréconciliables, et enfin d'avoir introduit sur le théâtre français, sans blesser la sévérité de notre goût et de nos règles, des formes et des couleurs qui manquaient à nostre littérature dramatique et que je crois indispensables à la tragédie moderne.

By closely copying Schiller, Lebrun has made Mary and Elizabeth living characters, two queens of fire and spirit facing each other over a host of battling issues. A new character enters in the person of young Mortimer, nephew of Mary's keeper, Amias Paulet. Mortimer has come from the seminary of Rheims and from Mary's uncle, the Cardinal of Lorraine, filled with plans of Catholic reform and so deeply in love with the Queen of Scots, whose portrait he has seen at the Cardinal's residence, that he has framed a plot with the French ambassador Aubespine and certain Spaniards to free her. Mary bids him confide his plans to Leicester, who is watching out for her safety. Norfolk disappears, Leicester taking his place as Mary's lover and Elizabeth's favorite; he appears anything but happy in his position of court favorite:

> Livré par ma fortune à la haine publique,
> Esclave d'une femme altière et despotique
> Soumis à son caprice, et jouet incertain
> Tantôt de son amour, tantôt de son dédain;
> Outragé, soupçonné, persécuté sans cesse
> Par sa sévérité, comme par sa tendresse. (Act II, scene II)

For ten years he has worked to win the hand of his sovereign, but now Elizabeth's projected marriage with the Duke of Anjou [60] upsets all Leicester's ambitious plans and throws him back to his former love, Mary, Queen of Scots. He confides to Mortimer that he plans to save Mary by ruse in contriving a meeting between the two queens at Fotheringay; Elizabeth at his demand has appeared to condescend to stop at the castle during one of her hunting trips, though Leicester knows that in reality she is most eager to interview her enemy:

> Elle hesite, elle n'ose, elle unit dans son âme
> L'audacieux despote et la timide femme;

---

[60] Medicis
Au trône des Anglais met son troisième fils.
(Act II, scene II)

This matrimonial proposal began in 1572 and ended with Anjou's death in 1584. It is an anachronism here.

A mes vœux, non aux siens, elle feint de céder,
Et ce qu'elle a voulu, semble me l'accorder.
(Act II, scene II)

In the third act we have the moving scene of the queens' meeting—the first really masterly picture of their interview. Elizabeth remains haughty, giving thanks to Heaven that she finds Mary kneeling before her:

Le ciel juste entre nous vous met en votre place.
(Act III, scene IV)

When Mary speaks of her unfortunate life, Elizabeth bids her blame only herself for the hardships she has suffered:

N'en accusez que vous, votre jalouse haine,
Et peut-être, avant tout, la maison de Lorraine. (*ibid.*)

Elizabeth alludes also to Mary's colorful past, which so stirs the anger of the Queen of Scots that she violently breaks out against Elizabeth:

Le fruit de l'adultère
Profane insolemment le trône d'Angleterre.
Le noble peuple anglais, par la fraude trompé
Gémit depuis vingt ans sous un sceptre usurpé.
Si le ciel était juste, indigne souveraine,
Vous seriez à mes pieds, et je suis votre reine. (*ibid.*)

Cecil, in this play as in Tronchin's, watching for plots against the queen, and ferreting out every suspicious symptom of conspiracy, suspects Leicester's intelligence with Mary; Leicester, in order to clear himself, reveals the plot of Mortimer and allows the young *exalté* to be seized as a traitor. The astute Cecil considers the moment auspicious to prevail upon Elizabeth to sign Mary's death-warrant:

Prenez pitié du peuple, et non d'une perfide,
Soyez un roi, non pas une femme timide.
(Act IV, scene VII)

Elizabeth, remembering Mary's pride and insulting words, signs the warrant and bids Leicester see to its execution. The entire fifth act shows the pathetic scene of Mary's preparation for death,[61] her farewell to her servants, and her pardon to all her

[61] Brantôme in his *Vies des Dames Illustres*, edition of Louis Moland, Paris, Garnier, pp. 123-132, describes her last hours.

enemies. Leicester, overcome with emotion, falls senseless while witnessing the execution.

The modifications made by Lebrun to Schiller's tragedy are for the most part minor; he suppresses certain characters—Shrewsbury, Aubespine, and Bellièvre do not appear; he simplifies the action, omitting references to certain of Elizabeth's activities mentioned by the German dramatist and to the attempt upon her life [62] on her return from Fotheringay; he omits the scene of Mortimer's passionate declaration to Mary, considering it revolting, and also the suicide of Mortimer when he finds himself betrayed by Leicester. Lebrun softens Leicester's [63] character somewhat, making him fall senseless at the end of the tragedy, and not showing the last scene of Schiller, where Elizabeth gradually abandoned by her courtiers, learns that Leicester has fled to France—flight would make him reach the nadir of cowardliness.

Mr. Szwarc thinks the Mary of Schiller resigned to her lot:

> C'est une femme accablée par dix-neuf ans de captivité dont les forces, la beauté, et l'esprit sont affaiblis par les mauvais traitements . . . Marie Stuart montant sur l'échafaud pour la raison d'Etat, mourant pour satisfaire des puritains fanatiques, Marie Stuart, si grande dans les derniers moments de sa vie, est une victime digne de pitié et une héroine capable d'inspirer une grande œuvre: telle est la pièce de Schiller.[64]

Yet Schiller himself has plainly shown Mary still active, still entering into plots for her freedom, and in her interview with Elizabeth boldly becoming the aggressor in heaping taunts upon the Tudor monarch, thus bringing about her own doom. It is in this activity of Mary that one gets more real dramatic action than one could possibly find in the character of an innocent martyr.

Schiller, and therefore likewise Lebrun, gives a harsh picture of Elizabeth. Not content with showing her jealous and arrogant, he makes her cruel and hypocritical; he gives no evidence of Elizabeth's consummate ability as a monarch to offset this adverse portrait of her as a deceitful tyrant. One sees, of course,

[62] Camden, *op. cit.*, pp. 336-340, tells of the Ballard and Babington plot.

[63] Talma played the rôle of Leicester.

[64] Herc Szwarc, *op. cit.*, pp. 123, 127.

the necessity of such a portrait in order to make Mary the sympathetic heroine, but the historical character suffers thereby. The Queen of Scots dies in this tragedy, not as the guilty accomplice in foreign plots upon Elizabeth's life, but as the victim of a petty female spite.

The success of Lebrun's tragedy attracted the subject to other theaters and in August of the same year, 1820, Merle [65] and Rougemont [66] performed a three-act drama in prose, imitated from Schiller's tragedy, at the Théâtre de la Porte-Saint-Martin.[67] These dramatists make a very close adaptation of the German work in keeping more of the characters than did Lebrun and in changing the settings. A delightfully naïve flavor penetrates the last act, in Mary's writing before her execution to her son James in Scotland, telling him not to censure Elizabeth and the English for what they are now doing to her:

> Il est dans l'intérêt du trône de taire un pareil crime, pour ne pas les accoutumer à en commettre de pareils, dont votre fils Charles serait la première victime. (Act III, scene V)

Mary writes in 1587; her grandson Charles was not born until 1600.

Another echo of Schiller's work resounds in the one-act play of Eugène de Pradel,[68] *Marie Stuart,* improvised for the fourth *soirée* of Neuchatel, November 5, 1829. Pradel reduces the number of characters to a minimum, having only Mary, Elizabeth, Leicester, Cecil, Melvil, and Mary's *suivante* Anna. He owes much of his inspiration to Schiller, especially in the meeting of the two queens, in the scene of Mary's preparation for death, and in Leicester's soliloquy at the conclusion. Pradel's work adds nothing new to the Mary Stuart theme.

As a reaction against Lebrun's adaptation of Schiller's *Maria Stuart* a certain C.-F. Martin printed in 1841 a five-act tragedy, in the preface of which he asserts that he had not known of

[65] Merle (Jean Toussaint) (1785-1852), wrote witty criticisms for several newspapers. From 1822 to 1826 he directed the Théâtre de la Porte-Saint-Martin. He married the celebrated actress, Marie Dorval.

[66] Rougemont (Michel Nicolas Ballison de), writer of novels and dramas as well as political works.

[67] First performed August 8, 1820; published the same year by Barba.

[68] Eugène de Pradel (1787-1857), improvised easily in all genres.

Lebrun's tragedy.[69] (M. Martin must have been unconscious at the time of Lebrun's vogue). He has printed his play at his own expense, hoping that certain lovers of classical literature would find in it some pleasing lines and would feel grateful for his effort to show that "l'enflure romantique n'est pas tellement invétérée dans notre langue qu'on ne puisse échapper à la contagion."[70] His conception of classical tragedy does not include, evidently, the rules of unity, all three of which he violates. Although Martin says that he seeks inspiration elsewhere, he makes his play very similar to Schiller's in the cast of characters, in the characterization, and in the plot: again we have the hunt near Fotheringay, Mary's exultation in her freedom, the rivalry of Cecil and Leicester, Talbot's sympathetic attitude toward Mary, and the meeting of the queens. Count Aubespine, the ambassador from France, takes the place of Mortimer in his love for the captive queen and in his plot for her rescue. Leicester remains in the rôle of luke-warm lover, transferring his affections from Elizabeth to Mary, finally resting with Elizabeth because he knows that with her lies his security and power. The tragedy is a biassed picture in Mary's favor, written, one should gather, from sectarian motives, and portraying the Queen of Scots as a holy martyr sacrificed in her complete innocence[71] after having been submitted to wretchedness and suffering during her long imprisonment. Melvil thus describes her captivity:

> Dans un cachot humide, infect et sans toiture,
> D'un ciel âpre et glacé supportant la froidure,
> Qu'elle a souffert longtemps! ni larmes ni douleurs
> N'émurent la pitié de nos persécuteurs.
>
> (Act I, scene I)[72]

Elizabeth becomes with Martin the arch-fiend of hypocrisy;

[69] "Quand je portai, cet hiver, cette pièce au Théâtre Français j'y rencontrai celle que M. Lebrun fit sur le même sujet, et que jusque-là j'avais ignorée."

[70] On the title-page he prints the lines of Béranger:

> N'allons point en Germanie
> Chercher les règles du goût.

[71] Mary is shocked at Aubespine's suggestion of seizing the English throne, Act IV, scene V.

[72] Martin forgets that Mary lived comfortably with a retinue of more than fifty attendants.

the second act shows her assembling her council merely to veil her secret desires under the form of justice and to give a cloak of legality to her arbitrary dictates. The Tudor queen fears that the crafty Cecil may penetrate her ruse and vows in such an event to ruin him. Her hypocrisy finds its final expression in her soliloquy of the last act in which she apostrophizes Mary and tells her how to rule successfully. On her throne, surrounded by her courtiers, she tells the French ambassador that her ministers have tricked her, that they alone are responsible for taking the life of her " pauvre sœur ". Elizabeth's last *aparté* epitomizes Martin's conception of her character:

> Sot à dissimuler ne sut jamais régner.
>
> (Act V, scene VII)

The play remains as violent an attack upon Elizabeth as [73] any written for the theater; one is not surprised that it never reached the stage.

The Mary Stuart subject became known not only on the legitimate stage but also in opera. Théodore Anne wrote a five-act libretto which was set to music by Niedermeyer and produced for the first time at the Théâtre de l'Académie royale de musique, December 6, 1844. Act I of this opera shows Mary leaving the port of Calais to return to her native-land; Acts II and III recount her troubles in Scotland; Act IV describes her imprisonment and escape from Lochleven, and Act V her execution at Fotheringay. The final act, which alone concerns the present study, shows the meeting of the queens, the same insults, the execution of Mary, and Bothwell, rushing out too late with a pardon from Elizabeth, and confessing that he alone is guilty of all the crimes imputed to the unhappy queen.

* * *

Other dramatists have given us the story of Mary's return to Scotland, which does not concern us except in casual allusions to the Queen of England. In 1824 the dramatist Empis presented

[73] The author makes Elizabeth no less facile in the settlement of her love-affairs; when the faithless Leicester has once more returned to her she calmly remarks:

> Je vous rends ma faveur, rendez-moi votre flamme.
>
> (Act V, scene IV)

his *Bothwell*,[74] in which Mary shows Darnley Elizabeth's distaste for their marriage:

Je vous ai préféré à tous les princes d'Europe. Mon choix me valut la haine d'Elisabeth et la révolte des nobles les plus puissants du royaume. (Act IV, scene III)

After Darnley's murder, his father, Lenox, threatens Mary with retribution:

Elisabeth t'attend: reine, elle vengera le sang des rois. (Act V, scene VIII)

In a drama of 1829 entitled *La Jeunnesse de Marie Stuart*[75] by Villeneuve[76] and Vanderburch[77] we get some fantastic distortions of historical facts. Part II shows Mary, when on the point of leaving France to embark for Scotland in 1561, confronted by the young Earl of Essex whom Elizabeth has sent as envoy from England to demand that Mary accept the treaty of Edinburgh,[78] in return for which concession Elizabeth will grant her unlimited protection against the Scotch heretics. But Mary, although she has had a bad dream[79] which she takes as a premonition of future disaster, nevertheless decides to become queen of Scotland.[80] Turning to Essex, she refuses the English escort and the play closes with her famous adieus to France. From this drama one learns at least one of the causes of rivalry between the two queens. Young Essex, pictured as Elizabeth's favorite,[81]

[74] Presented at the Théâtre Français, June 21, 1824; published in Paris by Barba, 1837.

[75] Played at the Théâtre de Madame by the *comédiens ordinaires de S. A. R.*, June 27, 1829, and published at Paris the same year.

[76] Théodore Ferdinand Vallou de Villeneuve was a fecund *vaudevilliste* of the nineteenth century.

[77] Emile Louis Vanderburch (1794-1862) a good *vaudevilliste*, but his one play at the Théâtre Français was not successful.

[78] It involved a renunciation of Mary's claim to the English throne.

[79] "Une femme cruelle fixait sur moi un œil d'envie et foulait aux pieds ma couronne . . . Un homme . . . d'une figure effrayante et qui semblait obéir à ses ordres s'approche de moi . . . un fer étincelant dans ses mains . . . on jeta un cri affreux . . . épouvantable! . . . et je m'éveillai (Part II, scene II)."

[80] "En gardant ma couronne je n'aurai que des ennemis! et je le sens, mon rêve s'accomplirait un jour (Part II, scene XII)!"

[81] A gross anachronism; Essex was born in 1567.

at first sight of Mary is struck by her dazzling beauty and admits:

> Je comprends maintenant la haine d'Elisabeth.
> (Part II, scene XI)

Another drama dealing with Mary's return to Scotland, *Le Retour de Marie Stuart en Ecosse,*[82] was written by the Baroness d'Ordre.[83] The plot in general does not interest us, since it deals with a period prior to that which possesses any close relations between the queens, yet certain comments of the characters about the Tudor sovereigns throw some illuminating rays upon the author's conception of these dynasts. In the opening scene, a prior, in his endeavor to convert a disciple of John Knox to the Catholic religion, asserts that all the troubles of the Scots date from the arbitrary actions of King Henry VIII:

> Avez-vous aussi approfondi la vie de Henri VIII, dont les uns encensent les voies royales et que d'autres maudissent pour les travers qu'il a embrassés; on ne peut se le cacher, il a été bien coupable; après avoir marché de vice en vice, de convoitise en convoitise, il a bravé le pouvoir suprême pour se jeter dans les voies du désordre, en entraînant tout un peuple après lui, par lui ont commencé les maux qui en ce pays nous affligent, des maux dont on ne peut ni prévoir ni concevoir la fin. (Act I, scene I)

Henry's daughter Elizabeth now makes trouble for the Queen of Scots in barring her passage to Scotland, in sending embassies, and in opposing her marriage to Darnley.[84] Mary has one powerful weapon, however, against her enemy, and one that she does not fail to use in every possible circumstance—her physical beauty. Even to her maid she exults in her superior charm and taste:

> J'espère que vous distinguerez en me coiffant; ne prenez surtout pas modèle sur les riches et malséantes coiffures de notre digne et raide sœur Elisabeth d'Angleterre; excluez des variétés de vos soins tout cet amas de perles en forme de poires, qui tombent symétriquement sur un

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[82] Published in *Histoires Dramatiques*, Paris, Dentu, 1839.

[83] Sophie, wife of the Baron d'Ordre, a nineteenth-century writer.

[84] Mary in her letter to Rizzio writes:

"... Je ne conserve aucun doute sur la perfidie de notre digne sœur Elisabeth; c'est elle qui tient entre ses mains les ressorts du mauvais génie qui me suscite des troubles, et qui éveille pour moi des mésaventures; elle éloignera de moi repos et bonheur. (Act V, scene VI)"

front haut et sans grâces, et sur de grandes épaules surmontées d'un cou épais et torturé, sur lequel descendent d'une grande oreille des parures de la largeur d'une main, et se balancent sur une touffe de fraise à pointes aigües, surmontées de bijoux matériels se joignant sur une poitrine flasque et sans retenue, sur laquelle flottent et se balancent une partie des richesses de la couronne, tant en or et en médaillons, aux armes d'Angleterre qu'en chiffres au nom de leur gracieuse Majesté, que Dieu maintienne en paix avec la reine d'Ecosse, Majesté huguenotte jusqu'à la lie, à principes erronés et pleins d'affectation; Majesté qui de sa robe à longue queue comme une étoile à queue, veut entraîner après elle les astres et les mondes. (Act III, scene IX)

Only a woman could thus describe another woman whom she considered her rival.[85]

In 1778 the Italian dramatist Alfieri had written a tragedy entitled *Maria Stuarda* showing the life of the Queen of Scots after the murder of Rizzio and before the murder of Darnley. The French translator, C. B. Petitot, calls it the weakest of Alfieri's plays, because the plot is advanced by minor characters rather than protagonists, because Darnley, though well pictured as weak and luckless, leaves the audience cold, because Mary, though she appears as a tender and loving woman, does not appear as a queen, and because Bothwell, the plotter, is so clever in concealing his intrigues that even the audience remains mystified. This tragedy concerns us mainly in the fact that it introduces Elizabeth's ambassador Ormondo,[86] who asks Mary to allow her son James to be educated in England and reared as Elizabeth's heir. When Mary refuses, Ormondo tries to draw Darnley into a scheme of abducting the child, but Bothwell discovers the plan and the English ambassador is summarily dismissed.

Alfieri's play is important as having served as the inspiration to Charles Rey's *Henri et Marie Stuart,* a five-act tragedy published at Nîmes in 1852. Here, too, Lord Ormond plays the

[85] Cf. John Drinkwater's *Mary Stuart:* "Craft is against me, my friend . . . Lethington works, and my brother Moray works. And Elizabeth waits. They will do as she wishes. She knows it, and I know. I am too beautiful for her. She has poets who call her beautiful too. If Mary were their Queen, what a song it would be. She knows it. It's a little secret satisfaction that." *Collected plays of John Drinkwater,* London, 1925, p. 175.

[86] This incident is unhistorical.

rôle of ambassador from Elizabeth,[87] asking that the child James come to England to be the heir of the virgin queen:

> Jamais Elisabeth, timide à s'engager,
> Sous les lois de l'hymen ne voulut se ranger.
> (Act I, scene V)

He secretly treats with Darnley and as a pledge produces a letter bearing Elizabeth's seal, which reads:

> Ormond sait mes desseins sur un enfant que j'aime;
> S'engager avec lui, c'est comme avec moi-même.
> (Act III, scene VI)

The tragedy is replete with Mary's expressions of hostility toward the Tudor sovereign:

> La fière Elisabeth, ma mortelle ennemie,
> Par mon hymen surtout dans sa haine affermie,
> Mais habile à cacher ses sentiments jaloux,
> Feint de s'intéresser au sort de mon époux.
> (Act I, scene IV)
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Je crains Elisabeth lorsque sa haine éclate;
> Mais je la crains bien plus alors qu'elle me flatte.
> (Act II, scene III)

When the Queen of Scots discovers the plot of Darnley's taking young James to England, she breaks out in execration against her foe:

> Elisabeth! perfide, exécrable ennemie! (Act IV, scene VI)

In the final act Darnley's father, Lenox, comes to pray for his son's life, but in the very midst of his conversation with Mary he hears a terrific explosion and learns that Darnley has been murdered. Bothwell's tool, Balfour, accuses the English preacher Cranmer who protests his innocence and in prophetic tones foretells Mary's doom.

* * *

Just as the Thomas More story became a popular theme for plays in boys' or girls' boarding schools, so also the Mary Stuart subject proved a favorite. We have already noted the adaptation

[87] In 1853 an anonymous 5-act drama entitled *Darley*, published under the initials A. S. . . ., de M. gives Ormond (Osmond) the same rôle. The tragedy is an obvious imitation of Alfieri's work.

of Regnault's play for the Collège d'Harcourt in 1689; now the nineteenth-century abbés make a similar adaptation of Schiller's drama. In 1851 J. A. Guyet wrote a three-act historical drama which he announced as "composé pour les Distributions de Prix et les récréations littéraires dans les pensionnats de demoiselles." Like Théodore Anne's libretto, Act I takes place in France, showing Mary's departure from that country, Act II recounts her difficulties in Scotland, and only in Act III do we get a picture of Mary and Elizabeth at Fotheringay. Mary, as is usual in these school plays, is spotless; the Countess of Lenox herself exculpates her from the Darnley murder and accuses Elizabeth of having sent Lady Throckmorton into Scotland to lure Mary to England so as to declare the Queen of Scots a prisoner immediately afterwards.

About ten years later [88] the "jeunes personnes du pensionnat de Constantine" in Algiers performed a five-act drama adapted from Schiller by some anonymous author. In the preface the writer shows the necessity of changing all the men's rôles to those of women, which results in a most absurd caricature of the German dramatist's *chef d'œuvre*. In place of the stern Amias Paulet we see Madame Paulet, no less austere; Lady Cecil assumes her husband's rôle of wily politician; Lady Talbot represents the Catholic interests as Lady Aubespine represents those of France; and Mortimer, ready to embark on any rash enterprise to save the Queen of Scots whom he passionately loves, becomes here Georgine, daughter of Lady Paulet. The young girl acts simply as a messenger to communicate to the royal prisoner that Mortimer is working in her behalf. From the following paragraph of the preface one can understand the partisan character of the production:

Il m'était difficile d'admettre avec Schiller que Marie Stuart fût coupable du meurtre de son époux Darnley. Je crois, volontiers, une personne qui se déclare innocente jusqu'à l'échaffaud. Les protestants, furieux de son attachement à la religion catholique, n'ont rien épargné pour la montrer criminelle; mais les meilleurs historiens, les papes eux-mêmes, l'ont dite calomniée. Toutefois, j'ai pensé avec les auteurs les moins hostiles que ses imprudences avaient été la cause de tous ses malheurs.

---

[88] Published in Algiers, by the Typographie Duclaux in 1862.

The author shows Elizabeth, of course, in an adverse light; she cries arrogantly:

> Enfin dans mes Etats je suis reine et Papesse,
>
> (Act II, scene I)

and admits that only Mary's existence mars her pleasure. Hypocritically she goes about making preparations for her enemy's destruction and only after it is too late does she perceive her mistake:

> Cruels jeux du destin! vision décevante!
> Je croyais, en livrant cette hydre renaissante,
> La vaincre à tout jamais. Erreur, lady, c'est moi,
> C'est moi! qui suis vaincue et qui subis sa loi.
>
> (Act V, scene II)

At almost the same time (1864) [89] an abbé * * * composed a four-act drama modeled so closely on Lebrun's as to borrow whole groups of verses from that author's work. Here again we find all feminine rôles; Paulet becomes here the inexorable Clamir; Mortimer is played by Béatrix, who has no impelling motive for Mary's deliverance; and the height of the absurd comes with Leicester's metamorphosis into Lady Leicester, "Anglaise qui désire la délivrance de Marie." Lady Leicester shows herself a good Catholic when Beatrix asks her why she wishes to save the Scottish queen:

> Quel motif, dites-vous? . . . ah! ma chère patrie
> Par une usurpatrice indignement flétrie;
> Quel intérêt? . . . celui de la foi catholique,
> Qui ne veut plus pour reine une femme hérétique.
>
> (Act I, scene VII)

This composition offers nothing new in plot.

Still another Catholic manifesto appeared in the *Marie Stuart* of Abbé Elie Barin.[90] In the first tableau, Mary's Aunt, the Duchess of Guise, warns her against Elizabeth:

> Car c'est elle, au mépris de toutes vos bontés
> Qui soutient contre vous vos sujets révoltés
>
> . . . . . .
>
> En elle, croyez-moi, je flaire une ennemie.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> De son âme craignez l'hypocrite douceur.
>
> (Tableau I, scene II)

---

[89] Published in Paris, "sans date." The year *1864* is written in ink.

[90] A drama in three tableaux, published at Magne, 1896.

Mary replies that she has learned how to avoid dangers:

> Lorsque je vins en France une première fois
> D'Edouard Six j'évitais les pièges autrefois.[91]
> Pour rentrer maintenant en Ecosse j'espère
> Echapper à la sœur, comme jadis au frère.
>
> (Tableau I, scene III)

The second tableau gives Mary's adventurous escape from Lochleven which Walter Scott has so vividly told in his *Abbot;* the third brings us once more to Fotheringay. The Scottish queen's attendant, Mary Seyton, tells her that she has been condemned:

> Vous étiez la colombe aux serres du vautour.
>
> (Tableau III, scene II)

The meeting of Elizabeth and Mary loses much in having no strong motive for quarreling, since the author would not admit even an accusation against Mary's character: Elizabeth refuses to believe her prisoner's word that she will make no trouble if permitted to return to Scotland, whereat Mary becomes greatly insulted and breaks out angrily against the Tudor queen. The drama closes with the scene of Mary's courageous attitude toward death, by which Lady Paulet is so deeply moved that she falls at Mary's feet begging for pardon. After the curtain of the last act the audience is regaled with an "apothéose" which allows most of the girls of the *pensionnat* a part in the program:

> *Apothéose:* chœur de petites filles vêtues de robes blanches, au milieu d'elles Marie Stuart, triomphante, en reine, assise sur un trône, une palme à la main.

And they sing a song of her glorious martyrdom.

The following year abbé Joubert made a five-act tragedy [92] on the same subject, in which the male characters fortunately retained their rôles; a chorus of the four Marys,[93] the companions of the Queen of Scots, is added. The setting of the entire play is Fotheringay. In Act I, called *Le Passé,* we find Mary's attendants recounting her cruel treatment; she herself alludes to several of her hardships:

[91] One is at a loss to imagine what trap the young Edward aged ten could have laid for the child of six.

[92] Published in Paris, 1897, by the Librairie Catholique de l'œuvre de Saint Paul.

[93] Mary Lambrun, Mary Mortimer, Mary Dunbarton, Mary Kennedy.

En chaire leurs pasteurs me nommaient Jézabel
Me traitaient d'hérétique et me fermaient le ciel.
(Act I, scene III)
Tous mes crimes sont nés de mes droits, de leur peur
Et je serais sans doute à leurs yeux moins coupable
Si mon titre à régner était moins véritable. (*ibid.*)

Even her son accuses her of the Darnley murder of which she here again declares herself innocent.[94] Catherine de Médicis receives as black a portraiture as Elizabeth:

Cette autre Elisabeth, la fourbe Catherine
Sur le cœur de mon frère à cette heure domine.
(Act I, scene III)

George, son of Amias Paulet, here plays the rôle of Mortimer, telling Mary he has heard of her at the home of her uncle, the Cardinal of Lorraine:

Et Ronsard, Dubellay, Brantôme, l'Hôpital
Se groupaient, pour l'entendre, autour du Cardinal.
(Act III, scene I)

In the last act he reveals himself as a Catholic priest, come to administer the eucharist and receive her confession.[95] Mary avers once more her innocence of the Darnley murder, and concerning her marriage with Bothwell declares:

D'Elisabeth, hélas! je subis l'influence.

She denies all guilt also in plots against the Tudor queen. After the execution her attendant, Lucy Kurl, brings back as a sacred relic the blood-spattered handkerchief which has bound the martyr's eyes.

Joubert, of course, makes Elizabeth "une reine sans cœur," "un être inhumain," entirely unfeeling; she hates the common people, "ce tyran qui forge nos entraves," because they prevent her from ruling absolutely. She perceives, however, the danger to her reputation in allowing Mary's execution:

Ah! j'aurais préféré qu'un fer intelligent,
Un cas fortuit, un mal secret, un poison lent

---

[94] Joubert quotes Gaillard's *Histoire de la Rivalité de la France et de l'Angleterre:* "Sa vie est une preuve de son innocence et sa mort en est la démonstration."

[95] In Schiller's drama Melvil plays this rôle in Act V.

Sans éclat et sans bruit eût fini sa souffrance.
Pour ma soeur et pour moi c'était la délivrance.
Je suis grande au besoin; j'aurais payé sa mort,
Si Paulet [96] l'eût voulu, dix mille pièces d'or.
(Act IV, scene I)

Another imitation of Schiller's tragedy, though not written for a sectarian school, has the same conception of the protagonists' characters—the *Marie Stuart,* essai tragique en cinq actes et en vers, by a certain Fs. D*.[97] The author in his preface says that acting on the statement of a critic that Schiller, if he had not pictured the Queen of Scots as guilty, would have made *Marie Stuart* the finest of his tragedies, he has tried to paint his heroine as he found her in history. In his play he makes Leicester a *personnage muet*—perhaps he could find no other means of keeping Mary innocent.

As in Doigny du Ponceau's play, Mary puts the entire responsibility of her crimes in Scotland upon her bastard brother:

Oui, Mourray—Ce fut lui qui fit percer le sein
De mon auguste époux! ce fut cet inhumain,
Attiré par Cécil, Anglais fourbe et féroce,
Qui fit cacher Buthwel, pour son dessein atroce!
Lui seul trama l'hymen qui m'est tant reproché!
A me faire haïr il s'était attaché. (Act I, scene II)

In Act III we have the scene of Mary's trial before the council, Cecil accusing the Queen of Scots, and she in turn charging him with having forced her to marry Bothwell. The play lacks all dramatic action because Mary is the spotless victim of the old "tendenz drama," put to death by a diabolical woman whose every move works toward her enemy's ruin. No plot framed for Mary's escape makes the slightest change in the direction of events.

[96] Joubert, in a note, adds that Elizabeth at Paulet's refusal cried: "Voilà un homme bien incommode avec sa probité!" Augustus Jessopp, writing an article on Elizabeth in the *Dictionary of National Biography,* says of the queen's action: "By far the most dreadful reproach that posterity has to bring upon her is, and must ever remain, the fact that a week before the execution, Elizabeth made one last attempt to induce Sir Amyas Paulet and Sir Drue Drury to kill Mary Stuart privately."

[97] In the copy at the Bibliothèque Nationale "Dizac" is written in ink on the title-page. The play was published at Brive, 1856.

Elizabeth is again painted in blackest colors: although she knows Mary guiltless[98] of all the crimes charged to her, she decides on execution because of her jealousy at Mary's personal attraction which has lured both Norfolk and Shrewsbury, and would now ruin Leicester as well.[99] She will rid herself, therefore, of this woman who hinders her complete happiness:

> Qu'importe après ma mort, que je sois mal jugée,
> Pourvu qu'en mon vivant, je me trouve vengée!
> . . . . . .
> Qu'on me délivre enfin de cette Messaline!
> (Act IV, scene VII)

Her reluctance at signing the warrant is completely feigned:

> Je déplore sa mort; mais elle est nécessaire
> Pour sauver mon honneur, mon trône, et l'Angleterre.
> (Act IV, scene X)

A note from Mary's son, James Stuart, begging her to stop the execution, only makes her disdainfully hasten her prisoner's end.

A review of the Mary Stuart dramas shows how well-nigh impossible it is for men to write impartially upon this subject, although in any account of this episode by a critical historian one can find pretty conclusive proof both of Mary's guilt[100] and of Elizabeth's indifference to justice.

Although a host of dramas have been written about Mary Stuart, some less than mediocre, others fairly good, the subject has evoked no real masterpiece in French literature. Alfieri, writing in the preface of his *Maria Stuarda* on what he considered a subject truly *tragediabile,* pointed out that the death of Mary Stuart, victim of an implacable rival, is the necessary outcome of Elizabeth's hatred; such a subject is no more dramatic than the theme of a conspiracy in which all of the conspira-

[98] Par moi seule, les crimes de Marie
Feraient-ils soupçonner quelque supercherie? (Act IV, scene I)

[99] Pour elle, Leicester aurait vendu son âme! (Act IV, scene I)

[100] Cf. Sainte-Beuve, *Portraits Contemporains,* Paris, Michel Lyvé, 1870, vol. III, p. 170: "Je n'aborde pas la Marie Stuart réelle, celle de l'histoire approfondie; des travaux récents ont beaucoup fait pour l'éclairer jusque dans les plus secrets replis et pour désenchanter du personnage.

tors, moved by feelings of natural hatred against the tyrant, experience no inner conflict of emotions. The dramatist La Harpe had expressed somewhat the same views to Doigny du Ponceau when that author showed him his *Marie Stuard, Reine d'Ecosse:*

. . . Mais le sujet n'est nullement propre au théâtre; s'il l'était, Voltaire, ou moi, nous nous en serions emparés.

Nevertheless the character of Mary Stuart will continue to allure the popular imagination:

Malheur aux êtres sublimes qui provoquent l'incrédulité par une perfection trop complète, une vertu trop haute, une grandeur trop pure. Jeanne d'Arc est à peine comprise, les peuples n'ont pas eu le secret de cet ange guerrier.

Mais le protestant par son aversion, le catholique par sa sympathie, la femme par ses dévouements, le vieillard par ses tristesses, le jeune homme par ses désirs, tout le monde a compris l'héroine de Fotheringay; elle remuait toujours des fibres humaines, haines et amours, tout ce qui est passion, préjugé, mouvement populaire, noble pitié, tous les enthousiasmes, tous les souvenirs, et toutes les faiblesses.[101]

[101] Philarète Chasles, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

CHAPTER VII

Elizabeth and Essex

Queen Elizabeth's destiny in the French theater seems to be that of third party in a love triangle. As she came between Leicester and Amy Robsart, and later between Norfolk and Mary Queen of Scots, so now we shall see her, in a number of plays, come between the Earl of Essex and the young lady of his affections, whose name changes according to various versions of the romance. Robert Devereux, second Earl of Essex, first came to court as a precocious youth of ten, under the protection of his new step-father, the Earl of Leicester; even as a child he pleased the queen, and soon after the completion of his studies at Cambridge received an appointment as General of the Horse. But Essex's love of glory and his inordinate vanity soon made him jealous of certain courtiers—Raleigh, Robert Cecil, and Charles Blount. With the last-named gentleman he even went so far as to fight a duel, whereat Elizabeth is said to have cried, "By God's death, it were fitting someone should take him down and teach him better manners or there were no rule with him." Bored with court-life, Essex [1] in 1589 ran off to Portugal to the aid of Don Antonio against Philip II, whence the angry queen immediately summoned him to return. He further enraged his sovereign by a secret marriage with Walsingham's daughter, Frances, the widow of Sir Philip Sidney, but he became reconciled with Elizabeth a few months afterwards, and secured the command of the English troops sent to the aid of Henry of Navarre at Rouen. Later, in the seizure of Cadiz in 1596, he distinguished himself, but always the old sense of jealousy marred his complete happiness at court; his new grievance lay in the raising of Admiral Howard of Effingham to the earldom of Nottingham, a title which gave him precedence over Essex

[1] Cf. Camden, *op. cit.*, p. 430: "Robert, Earl of Essex . . . a very young Gentleman, who out of his eager thirst after military Glory, his Hatred against the Spaniards, and a commiseration towards Don Antonio, despising the Pleasures of the Court, had put himself to Sea, without the Queen's Knowledge, yea to the incurring of her Displeasure."

until Elizabeth raised her favorite to the position of Earl Marshal. Yet no sooner did Essex regain the monarch's favor than he lost it again by abetting the marriage of his friend, Southampton, with Elizabeth Vernon, and by his own scandalous affairs with various women of the court. But it was the Irish expedition that brought about Essex's downfall. In March, 1599, the earl sailed for Ireland to meet the rebel Tyrone, but after a few first successes the expedition came to nought; Essex came to terms with Tyrone and returned unexpectedly to London where the enraged queen ordered him to undergo trial for his misconduct. Essex finally secured his liberty, but could not rest content without making an effort to regain his former influence at court; when repeated messages to the queen failed to evoke any response, he determined to make a show of force. His conspiracy, however, failed miserably and served only to bring the rash young nobleman to the scaffold in the thirty-fourth year of his age.

Popular fancy has not failed to add much romance to the tale of Elizabeth and Essex: the queen is said to have given him a ring, with the promise that whenever he found himself in danger, if he sent her the ring he would thereby secure her protection. Essex sent the ring, but it did not reach the queen in time for her to grant his pardon. The story must be considered apocryphal since it does not appear in any contemporary accounts of the Tudor queen's reign,[2] but so popular has it become that we find it in all but one of the French dramas written about the Earl of Essex.

As La Calprenède pointed the way to French dramatists in writing about Mary Tudor (*Ieanne d'Angleterre,* 1638), he again stands as the pioneer in presenting the Essex story to his compatriots.[3] In 1639 appeared his *Comte d'Essex,*[4] dedicated

[2] Not until the middle of the century did actual books appear in England telling the ring story: about 1650 was published a *History of the Most Renowned Queen Elizabeth and her favorite Essex, a Romance*; in 1658 appeared Francis Osborne's *Traditional Memoirs of the Reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James I;* in 1688 the *Mémoires* of Louis Aubéry, sieur du Maurier, told the story of Nottingham's delaying the ring's passing into Elizabeth's hands.

[3] Cf. the Spanish drama of Coello, *El Conde del Sex* (1638).

[4] Published in 1639; no date of *privilège* is given; *achevé d'imprimer,* May 30.

to the Princesse Guimené [5] to whom he writes a most flattering eulogy.[6] The first scene shows Essex in disgrace after the Irish expedition, though the author does not make clear to the audience in just what the earl's guilt consists, since Essex denies all charges made against him in the affair with Tyrone and in his march with armed forces upon London. Essex remains confident of keeping the queen's favor but his friend Southampton [7] (Soubtantonne) bids him consider the sovereign's power:

> La puissance des Roys peust estre bornée
> Leur Caprice à leur gré fait nostre destinée,
> Nous sommes leur iouet & l'inconstante main
> Qui nous hausse auiourd'huy nous rabesse demain.
> (Act I, scene V)

Moreover, the queen's ambition rises above all her other characteristics:

> Cet esprit remuant, superbe, ambitieux;
> De quelque passion que son ame s'emporte
> Si son ambition ne sera pas plus forte,
> Le desir de regner estouffera tousiours
> Quelques ardeurs qu'elle ayt le soing de ses amours. (*ibid.*)

The act closes with the arrest of both Essex and Southampton.

After this first show of firmness, Elizabeth would now treat her favorite leniently and therefore confidentially [8] dispatches Lady Cecil to promise him that at a sign of his humility the

[5] Anne de Rohan, princesse de Guimené (Guémené).

[6] "I'offre vne excellente Reyne à vne excellente Princesse. . . . Si le Ciel eut adiousté à ses bonnes qualités vne partie des vostres, il en eut fait son chef d'œuvre, & que s'il eut pourueue des beautez de l'ame et du corps que vous possedez avec tant d'auantage, Nostre Comte n'eut pas esté ingrat aux preuues qu'il auoit receues de son amitié."

[7] Henry Wriothesley (1573-1624), third Earl of Southampton, was the patron of Shakespeare, who dedicated to him his *Venus and Adonis* (1593) and *Lucrece* (1594). Southampton lost his favor with the queen by his secret marriage to Elizabeth Vernon. He joined Essex's conspiracy, was imprisoned in the Tower and brought to trial with him February 19, 1601. Southampton's death-sentence was commuted to life-imprisonment, and upon the accession of James I in 1603 he regained his liberty.

[8] Elizabeth says:

> Mais surtout ne mets point mon honneur au hazard
> Et dissimule bien que ce soit de ma part. (Act II, scene II)

queen will restore him to her favor. Elizabeth does not know that Lady Cecil has formerly been the mistress of Essex and been abandoned by him; unwittingly she puts her lady-in-waiting to a severe test. Lady Cecil decides to interview Essex, but to deceive him if possible, so as to avenge herself. Essex insists once more upon his innocence.

In Act III Essex, appearing before his judges, shows no bending of his haughty spirit and even becomes accuser in charging his enemy Cecil as "partisan d'Espagne." Both he and Southampton are convicted of treason and condemned to death. At news of the sentence, Elizabeth puts aside all thought of her own glory to dwell only on her love for the prisoner:

> Que ce superbe bruit qui me rendoit si vaine
> Que ces rarés vertus d'vne si grande Reine,
> Cedent honteusement aus maximes d'amour
> Et que tout le passé se dissipe en vn iour,
> Pourveu que mon repos se trouue dans ma faute
> Ie ne me pique plus d'vne gloire si haute. (Act IV, scene I)

When her *suivante,* Alix, reminds her of Essex's several lapses of conduct, the distracted monarch can only answer:

> Il peut bien conspirer, il peut bien me trahir
> Il peut me mepriser, ie ne le puis hayr. (*ibid.*)

In a second interview with the prisoner, Lady Cecil secures from him the ring which will bring the queen's pardon. After a brief mental conflict in which she has been tempted to keep the ring and in this way obtain her vengeance, Lady Cecil resolves to save her former lover, but on the way she meets her husband who stays her footsteps. Elizabeth, angry that her proud captive has not deigned to send the ring, feels pacified at the news of his execution, but her majestic calm is broken when Lady Cecil, herself at the point of death, brings her the ring and tells how she has failed to deliver it; Elizabeth can only fall back weakly, crying:

> Ie perds le sentiment, & mon coeur s'affoiblit
> Pour la derniere fois, meine moy sur mon lict.
> (Act V, scene VII)

In regard to the ring-story La Calprenède states expressly in his *Au Lecteur:*

Si vous trouvez quelque chose dans ceste Tragedie que vous n'ayez point leu dans les Historiens Anglois, croyez que ie ne l'ay point inuenté, & que ie n'ay rien escrit que sur de bonnes memoires que i'en auois receues de personnes de condition, & qui ont peut-estre part à l'Histoire.

It is a misstatement, then, to assert that La Calprenède "invented the ring story." [9] The tale belongs to popular romances and modern critics [10] find an allusion to it as early as 1623 in an English tragi-comedy of John Webster, entitled *The Devil's Law Case,*

Let me die
In the distraction of that worthy princess
Who loathèd food, and sleep, and ceremony,
For thought of losing that brave gentleman
She would fain have saved, had not a false conveyance
Expressed him stubborn-hearted: let me sink
Where neither man nor memory may e'er find me.
(Act III, scene III)

The editor says of this passage: [11]

Here I think there is a manifest allusion to the closing scene of Queen Elizabeth's life and to what Mr. Lodge calls 'the well-known, but weakly authenticated tale of the Countess of Nottingham and the ring.'

Where La Calprenède picked up the story we do not know, but very evidently it grew out of court gossip and "an effort to reconcile the historical facts of the queen's affection for Essex and her signing his death warrant." [12] The Frères Parfaict [13] in their analysis of this tragedy have confused the ring story with some other account when they state that "le comte est

[9] Clarence D. Brenner makes such a statement in *L'Histoire Nationale dans la tragédie française,* University of California Publications in Modern Philology, vol. 14, no. 3, p. 210.

[10] Cf. Walther Baerwolff, *Der Graf von Essex im deutschen Drama,* Stuttgart, 1920, p. 10; Richard Schiedermair, *Der Graf von Essex in der Literatur,* Kaiserlautern, 1908, p. 33.

[11] Rev. Alexander Dyce, *The Works of John Webster,* London, Maxon, 1857; see also F. L. Lucas, *Complete works of John Webster,* New York, Houghton Mifflin, 1928, vol. II, pp. 343-344.

[12] H. C. Lancaster, "La Calprenède Dramatist," *Modern Philology,* July, 1920, p. 137. Professor Lancaster suggests that the story may have arisen also from the fact that Henry VIII gave Cranmer a ring which should save him from punishment.

[13] *Histoire du Théâtre François,* vol. V, p. 477.

possesseur de la moitié d'une bague . . . il donne la moitié de la bague à Madame Cécile."

As in his *Ieanne d'Angleterre,* La Calprenède uses historical names loosely: he makes Cecile, Secretaire d'Estat and le Comte de Salisbery two separate characters,[14] whereas we know from history that Cecil was himself made Earl of Salisbury in 1605 and that there had been no earl of that title since Richard Neville (1428-1471).

Although Essex is the central figure of the tragedy with his ambitious plans for ruling the state, Queen Elizabeth, with her struggle between her love for the prisoner and her duty as queen, offers much more psychological interest. The dramatist has pictured her as rather old, and as a queen, not breaking out in jealousy when Lady Cecil reveals Essex's former love-affair with her, but completely broken down at the realization that his punishment has been undeserved. The importance of facial expression in the rôles of the protagonists has recently been studied[15] and the conclusion reached, that La Calprenède is a predecessor of Racine in his endeavor to make all references to the human face an integral part of the action. In her prisoner's face Elizabeth believes she sees his guilt written,

> Tu paslis desloyal, & le remors imprime,
> Sur ton coupable front les marques de ton crime,
> (Act I, scene I)

and once convinced of that fact, she proceeds resolutely against him.

The defects of the play lie in the failure to give a clear exposition and in the introduction of Lady Cecil's rôle too late[16] to be well co-ordinated with the rest of the plot. But in spite of these faults, *Le Comte d'Essex* has been judged the best of La

[14] La Calprenède here led his successor, Thomas Corneille, to change the name of Essex's friend Southampton to Salisbury, thus incurring the censure of Voltaire in his *Remarques sur le Comte d'Essex, Œuvres,* ed. Moland, Paris, Garnier, 1880, vol. XXXII, p. 327. But Voltaire himself makes a slip of the same kind in enumerating Elizabeth's favorites: "Le comte de Leicester succéda dans la faveur à Dudley." *Loc. cit.*, p. 325.

[15] Cf. Maurice Baudin, "Le Visage humain dans la tragédie de la Calprenède", *Modern Language Notes,* February, 1930.

[16] Lady Cecil does not appear until Act II, scene II.

Calprenède's dramatic productions and served later as an inspiration to Thomas Corneille in his tragedy of the same name.

In the forty years which elapsed between La Calprenède's production and Corneille's, the French theater had changed, writers of classical tragedy had come to accept Racine as their model, and consequently Thomas Corneille's *Comte d'Essex* falls into this new category:

> Par la simplicité des situations, par la conduite de l'intrigue, qui est réduite presque à rien et dont les rares péripéties sont amenées par les événements extérieurs, *Ariane* et le *Comte d'Essex* pourraient être comparés même à *Bérénice*.[17]

In keeping with such technique, he reduces the number of characters to five:[18] Elizabeth; Essex; the Duchesse d'Irton, Essex's love; Salisbury, his friend; and Cecil, his enemy. The character of Essex is still further exculpated so that there remains no question of his innocence; what the queen and his enemies have taken for an uprising against the state has been nothing more than a desperate attempt to keep his adored Henriette from marrying the Duc d'Irton. Henriette, though much in love with Essex, has married the duke so as to preserve Essex's favor with his sovereign. Although he departs widely from history in his conception of Essex, Corneille abides by sober fact in the conclusion of the tragedy by omitting the ring story, which he says he did not find in Camden.

In the opening scene, Essex's friend, Salisbury, warns him that his enemies are working his ruin, and begs him to show more moderation in his actions. But Essex, proud and contemptuous, cannot alter his haughty demeanor, and when Cecil summons him before Elizabeth to allay her suspicions, he boldly accuses Cecil of inciting the queen against him. Goaded by such contempt, Cecil now prepares to act in earnest against his rival. The second act shows us Queen Elizabeth—by far the most interesting character of the tragedy—confessing her love for the young noble; her varying moods manifest themselves in her successive speeches: the first is merely an avowal of her passion:

[17] Gustave Reynier, *Thomas Corneille, sa vie et son œuvre*, Paris, Hachette, p. 170.

[18] There are, besides, the unimportant Capitaine des gardes, and Tilney, Elizabeth's *suivante*.

Il a trop de ma bouche, il a trop de mes yeux
Appris qu'il est, l'ingrat! ce que j'aime le mieux.
(Act II, scene I)

Then she begins to show irritation at Essex's actions:

Qu'il craigne cependant de me trop irriter:
Je contrains ma colère à ne pas éclater;
Mais quelquefois l'amour qu'un long mépris outrage,
Las enfin de souffrir, se convertit en rage. (*ibid.*)

Yet if he would show the slightest sign of affection for her, she would gladly forgive him; the moment his presence is announced her emotions surge:

C'est lui de mes bontés qui doit chercher l'appui,
Le péril le regarde, et je crains plus que lui. (Act II, scene V)

But Essex refuses to show that sign of affection so eagerly sought, and she angrily delivers him to the council who condemn him. She is thoroughly roused at the report of his proud bearing during the trial:

Mon bras, lent à punir, suspendoit la tempête:
Il me pousse à l'éclat; il paîra de sa tête. (Act III, scene I)

After this stern decree she breaks down and sends both her confidant, Tilney, and Salisbury to urge his manifesting some sign of repentance so that she may forgive him. The Duchesse d'Irton finally reveals to Elizabeth that she is the queen's rival and tries to explain Essex's actions on the day of her marriage. Elizabeth, after an outburst of jealous passion, once more lets her love gain the ascendancy, and once more promises forgiveness at a show of repentance on the part of Essex. But neither Tilney, his friend, Salisbury, nor even his beloved Henriette can shake the earl from his resolution to die, since with Henriette married, life holds no promise for him. In the final act, Elizabeth determines to spare Essex, even though he has not sued for her pardon, but her message arrives too late; at news of her favorite's death she collapses:

Faisons que, d'un infâme et rigoureux supplice,
Les honneurs du tombeau réparent l'injustice.
Si le Ciel à mes vœux peut se laisser toucher,
Vous n'aurez pas long tems à me la reprocher.
(Act V, scene VIII)

The Frères Parfaict[19] state that Thomas Corneille drew on much of La Calprenède's material for his tragedy, especially in the dénouement and in the character of the Duchesse d'Irton patterned after Lady Cecil. But Corneille differs in his conception of the protagonists: whereas La Calprenède had made Essex primarily ambitious, Thomas Corneille makes him proud; the Elizabeth of the former dramatist remains regal and does not display jealousy; the Elizabeth of Corneille is portrayed simply as a woman, who often forgets her queenly majesty to become the envious rival of Essex's adored lady; Henriette herself feels only love for Essex, while Lady Cecil was moved also by vengeance. Reynier[20] points out that, although the earl was probably considered the most important character by a seventeenth-century audience, his self-conceit and love of playing to the gallery soon grow unbearable and that therefore to the modern reader the queen's " états d'âme " offer a much more interesting study:

> Elle aime Essex dans un âge où les passions sont d'autant plus fortes qu'elles ne peuvent pas espérer d'être payées de retour; quand bien même le jeune comte répondrait à sa tendresse, le haut rang où elle est placée serait toujours entre eux une barrière infranchissable. . . . Voilà enfin une vraie femme, qui souffre, qui aime, qui est lâche parce qu'elle aime, et non plus une héroine de roman toujours juchée sur les grands sentiments, toujours maîtresse de son cœur!

Voltaire in his *Remarques sur le Comte d'Essex*[21] points out how Thomas Corneille has departed from history and censures his use of certain names such as le duc d'Irton, which are in no way historical, or his confusion of Salisbury and Southampton;[22] he objects also to the fact that Essex dies on the scaffold without Elizabeth's having signed his death-warrant;[23] in Elizabeth he can see only a ridiculous woman lacking force, elegance, and propriety; in Essex he tries to distinguish the historical figure, and failing in that, considers the whole play vague:

[19] *Op. cit.*, vol. V, p. 479.

[20] *Op. cit.*, pp. 174, 176.

[21] *Œuvres*, vol. XXXII, pp. 324-345.

[22] See note 14, p. 137.

[23] " En Angleterre . . . la signature du monarque est indispensable, et il n'y a pas un seul exemple du contraire, excepté dans les temps de trouble où le souverain n'était pas reconnu." *Op. cit.*, p. 343.

Il me semble qu'il y a toujours quelque chose de louche, de confus, de vague, dans tout ce que les personnages de cette tragédie disent et font. . . . Que veut le comte d'Essex? que veut Elisabeth? quel est le crime du comte? est-il accusé faussement? est-il coupable?[24]

La Harpe in his *Cours de Littérature*[25] makes similar objections. But should one not look for excellent dramatic technique, elegance of style, a truly tragic situation, and a penetrating character study rather than for mere historical facts in Thomas Corneille's production?

The tragedy, played in January, 1678, at the Hôtel de Bourgogne, enjoyed great popularity at the time of its first performance, in which la Champmeslé played the rôle of Elizabeth. More than any other of Thomas Corneille's plays it has survived its age; in the eighteenth century Adrienne Lecouvreur made Elizabeth's rôle popular, and we find chance references to the tragedy in literature: Rousseau in his *Lettre à D'Alembert*[26] mentions the *Comte d'Essex,* and Voltaire represents Candide[27] attending its performance on his arrival in Paris.

In 1678 its performances were so well attended that a rival theater, the Théâtre de Guénégaud, soon began playing a tragedy of the same name[28] composed by the abbé Claude Boyer.[29] Regarding the sources of this play, Boyer states in his preface:

[24] *Op. cit.*, pp. 335-336.

[25] Paris, Dupont, 1825, vol. VIII, pp. 149-157.

[26] *Œuvres Complètes,* Paris, Dalibon, 1824, vol. II, p. 38: "Plus j'y réfléchis et plus je trouve que tout ce qu'on met en représentation au théâtre on ne l'approche pas de nous, on l'en éloigne. Quand je vois le *Comte d'Essex* le règne d'Elisabeth se recule, à mes yeux, de dix siècles; et si l'on jouait un événement arrivé hier dans Paris, on me le ferait supposer du temps de Molière."

[27] *Œuvres Complètes,* ed. Moland, Paris, Garnier, 1879, vol. XXI, p. 189: "Candide fut très content d'une actrice qui faisait la reine Elisabeth dans une assez plate tragédie que l'on joue quelquefois."

[28] *Le Comte d'Essex,* tragédie par M. Boyer de l'Académie Française, à Paris, chez Charles Osmont, 1678; privilège le 18 mars; achevé d'imprimer, le 20 avril.

[29] Claude Boyer (1618-1698), born at Albi in Languedoc, author of many tragedies, pastorals, tragi-comedies, and operas. Although he became a member of the Académie Française in 1666, both Racine and Boileau continued to laugh at his fecundity. For a study of the abbé Boyer see: Ernst Göhlert, *Abbé Claude Boyer, ein Rivale Racines,* Leipzig, 1915.

Monsieur Corneille & moy nous avons puisé les idées d'un mesme sujet dans une mesme source: c'est à dire dans le Comte d'Essex que Monsieur de la Calprenède a fait il y a plus de trente ans. J'avouray de bonne foy que je l'ay imité dans quelques endroits, & que mesme je me suis servi de quelques vers de sa façon. J'ay crû que puisque nos meilleurs Autheurs se picquent d'emprunter les sentimens & les vers des Anciens qui nous ont devancés de plusieurs siecles, que nous pouvions aussi emprunter quelques chose de ceux qui ne sont plus & qui nous ont precedés de quelques années . . .

Boyer keeps practically the characters of La Calprenède's tragedy with only a slight change of names: Coban (Cobham) [30] takes the place of Cecil, and the Duchesse de Clarence fills the rôle of Lady Cecil. Salisbury, as in Thomas Corneille's play, takes the part of Southampton as Essex's friend. Coban is not merely an enemy of Essex; he also aspires to the hand of the queen. The Duchess of Clarence knows of his ambitious designs as he knows of her secret love for Essex, and the two match their weapons fiercely in striving for their ends. As in La Calprenède's tragedy, Essex's guilt is questionable; here again he tears up the letters to the Irish Tyrone calling them "faux écrits"; in the the trial scene of Act III he refuses to make any defense of his action; and even the queen's interruption in the midst of the council-meeting can bring forth no avowal from him, so that the monarch angrily demands the resumption of his trial. After Essex's condemnation, the Duchess of Clarence, anxious to save her lover, her "unique bien", reveals the ambitious projects of Coban to Elizabeth, who would be more than delighted to find a reason for saving Essex; her enemy Coban reciprocates by disclosing to the queen the love of Essex and Clarence. Elizabeth shows her jealousy quite like the monarch of Thomas Corneille, but Clarence pacifies her and moves her to a feeling of tenderness for her prisoner much as did the Duchesse d'Irton. Clarence finally arrives with the ring [31] as

[30] Henry Brooke, eighth lord Cobham, was a brother-in-law and friend of Robert Cecil, therefore an enemy of Essex, who took part in Essex's trial. Camden mentions him along with Cecil and Raleigh as Essex's adversary.

[31] Boyer says in his preface:

Je n'ay pas oublié la circonstance de la bague. Je veux croire que Monsieur Corneille le jeune a eu ses raisons pour le faire. Je la

a sign of Essex's humility and the queen immediately dispatches a messenger to stop the execution, but the wicked Coban, by issuing a contrary order, hastens his enemy's death. Coban's subsequent death cannot assuage Elizabeth's grief.

Boyer's play lacks careful construction and good taste; the reader immediately feels himself removed from the simple action of Thomas Corneille's tragedy with its one theme of love. In the conception of Coban as the ambitious enemy working for Essex's downfall, and in the outbreak of the populace against the earl's sentence, the play reminds one of Boursault's *Marie Stuart;* in fact all three of these seventeenth-century tragedies on Essex have a theme similar to the Mary Stuart-Norfolk-Elizabeth plays of the same period.

The Frères Parfaict call the *Comte d'Essex* Boyer's best play and express satisfaction in his having been obliged to prepare it quickly for the stage since the plays over which he worked longer, he marred by over-correction.[32] The same critics consider Boyer's play far superior to La Calprenède's:

Elizabeth et le Comte d'Essex agissent avec plus de dignité, & sont plus interessans. Coban qui tient la place de Cecile de M. de la Calprenède, le surpasse en esprit, et en adresse; & la Duchesse de Clarence l'emporte fort sur Madame Cecile par sa veritable tendresse & la generosité de ses sentimens.[33]

But surely the Elizabeth and Essex of La Calprenède showed no lack of dignity; on the contrary, Boyer's Coban acts more like the villain of a romantic tragi-comedy, a type like Boursault's Murray, whose ambition drives him to treachery. La Calprenède's tragedy, in my opinion, conforms much more cloesly to classical tradition than Boyer's, which borders on the tragi-comedy.

After Boyer's tragedy the Essex story encountered a long period of silence; no plays on that subject appeared during the

tiens historique, & d'ailleurs c'est une tradition si constante parmy les Anglois, que ceux de cette Nation qui ont vû le Comte d'Essex à l'Hostel de Bourgogne, ont eu quelque peine à le reconnoistre par le deffaut de cet incident.

[32] *Histoire du Théâtre François*, vol. XII, p. 101: "Il auroit cherché à y mettre de l'esprit, des pointes, & des ornemens à sa façon qui n'auroient servi qu'à la gâter."

[33] *Op. cit.*, vol. XII, p. 110.

eighteenth century, and only in the nineteenth, with the beginnings of romantic tragedy did it recur. In 1829 Ancelot's[34] five-act tragedy, entitled *Elisabeth d'Angleterre,*[35] revived the story. As characteristic of the nineteenth-century theater, Ancelot's play possesses complicated intrigue, rich background, and local color, but lacks the fine psychological analysis of the seventeenth-century productions. The story itself more closely resembles those of the English tradition in presenting as Essex's mistress, not Lady Cecil, a Duchesse d'Irton, nor a Duchesse de Clarence, but the Countess (Duchesse) of Nottingham, first lady-in-waiting to Elizabeth.[36] The courtiers, Cecil and Raleigh, here reappear with the addition of the Earl of Nottingham, who takes the place of Southampton as Essex's friend, and of La Calprenède's Cecil in the rôle of betrayed husband. As in Aubéry du Maurier's *Mémoires,* it is the Earl (Duc) of Nottingham who keeps his wife from delivering the ring to the queen, and Cecil does not figure in this part of the tragedy.

In Act I, Essex, during his interview with Elizabeth, speaks no gallant word, indeed does not even manifest jealousy when

[34]Ancelot (Jacques-Arsène-François-Polycarpe), born at Havre, 1794, died in Paris, 1854. He composed a tragedy, *Warbeck,* which was received by the Comédie Française but never performed. His masterpiece is the historical tragedy *Louis IX* (1819). In 1849 under the direction of M. de Tocqueville, minister of foreign affairs, he undertook a mission to Turin, Florence, Brussels, etc. for the mutual observance of copyrights.

[35] Played for the first time at the Théâtre Français, December 4, 1829; published by Bréauté, Paris, 1829.

[36] Cf. Richard Schiedermair, *Graf von Essex in der Literatur,* Kaiserlautern, 1908; Walther Baerwolff, *Der Graf von Essex im deutschen Drama,* Stuttgart, 1920, who in their works have made a study of the English plays of Banks, Jones, and Brooke. In 1685 John Banks produced his *Unhappy Favorite or the Earl of Essex* in the Royal Theater; in 1748-9 Henry Brooke played his *Earl of Essex* in Dublin and in 1761 produced it in London in Drury Lane; in 1753 a third production, Henry Jones' *Earl of Essex,* appeared at Covent Garden. All these English tragedies follow the story of 1650, *History of the Most renowned Queen Elizabeth and her great Favourite, the Earl of Essex. In Two Parts. A Romance,* in which Essex is secretly married to the Countess of Rutland, and both the Countess of Nottingham and Queen Elizabeth are her rivals for his love. Banks makes the Countess of Nottingham, thirsting for vengeance, responsible for Essex's death by failing to deliver the ring.

she praises Sir Walter Raleigh, so that she fears he no longer loves her; in fact he may love some other woman:

> Qui que tu sois, ô toi qui m'as ravi son cœur,
> Prends garde! jouis bien d'un rapide bonheur,
> La fille d'Henri huit, si longtemps outragée,
> Peut se lasser enfin de n'être pas vengée. (Act I, scene VII)

In the second act we see the guilty love of the Countess of Nottingham and Essex. Since the sight of the ring which Elizabeth has given to her favorite saddens the countess, Essex presents it to her, while she in turn gives him a scarf she has embroidered for him. After Essex's departure, Nottingham returns from the night-session of Parliament to tell his wife of Essex's conviction. He speaks of his friendship for Essex and murmurs happily about his own domestic felicity. Is the scarf he has seen his wife embroidering for himself? Act III takes us back to the court with Raleigh's report of Essex's seizure, and his delivery to Elizabeth of the fatal scarf which Essex has tried desperately to keep at the time of his capture. When Nottingham arrives to make a last stand for his friend before the queen, she shows him the scarf which a rival of hers has given Essex; Elizabeth notes the nobleman's pallor but cannot guess his mental anguish. In the latter part of the tragedy the Countess of Nottingham, who tries to send the ring to the queen, is detained by her angry husband and arrives too late to save her lover. When Elizabeth learns the whole truth, she is stricken at the thought that perhaps Essex sought her aid in his last moments:

> Sans doute en m'accusant le malheureux est mort!
> Je ne survivrai point à cet affreux remord. (Act V, scene V)

She falls back weakly into an arm-chair and, when Cecil begs her to think of affairs of state, cries wearily,

> A qui viens-tu parler de grandeur souveraine?
> Regarde-moi, Cécil! . . . ai-je l'air d'une reine?
> Tout est fini; va-t'en! je n'ai plus de sujets.
> Que me font vos traités, vos guerres, vos projets? (*ibid.*)

Pointing to her empty throne,

> Voilâ mon trône! . . . ici que mon règne s'achève! [37]

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[37] Though not expressly stated, this death-scene sounds like a repre-

Ancelot had, perhaps, read Voltaire's criticism of Thomas Corneille's *Comte d'Essex,* since he carefully shows Elizabeth signing the death-warrant. Like many of Dumas's and Hugo's tragedies and all melodramas, the plot advances by external means rather than by inner conflict: the embroidered scarf here plays as important a rôle as Ethelwood's toque or Rodolfo's mantle. The author in true nineteenth-century style makes several allusions to Shakespeare, representing him as Essex's familiar, and showing the Countess of Nottingham reading *Othello* while thinking of her husband whom she betrays.

That the Essex story proved popular is attested by the fact that a few years later, in 1838, it became the libretto for one of Donizetti's operas, *Roberto Devereux, Conte d'Essex,* with words by Salvador Cammarano, who closely follows Ancelot's tragedy.[38] In 1841 the same opera was given in French at Rouen, Etienne Monnier having translated the Italian words of Cammarano into French verse.

Variations of the Essex theme appear in two subsequent productions. A certain Edouard Marteau composed *Elisabeth, reine d'Angleterre et d'Irlande,* tragi-comédie en deux journées et trois parties, which makes not Essex but Sir Charles Blount the queen's favorite. The skit recounts one of Elizabeth's early love-affairs: Hélène, her lady-in-waiting, becomes publicly engaged to General Jean Norris, and Elizabeth, in token of her approval of the marriage, presents one of her bracelets. In Part II there appears in the park a masked lady whom Essex would follow but that Sir Charles Blount, who has become enamoured of a masked lady, prevents him. Norris picks up a bracelet dropped by the mysterious lady and recognizes it as the one given to Hélène by the queen. In Part III Elizabeth enters, naming Essex leader of the army in Holland, and in a confidential interview with Hélène bids her state that she has lost her bracelet. When Norris subsequently produces a bracelet similar to Hélène's and accuses her of having given a secret rendezvous to

sentation of Paul Delaroche's painting, *La Mort de la Reine Elisabeth* (1827).

[38] A note on the title-page of a French and Italian edition states: "Le sujet de ce drame est historique. Toutefois on doit ajouter que l'auteur a imité en partie la tragédie de M. Ancelot, *Elisabeth d'Angleterre.*"

Sir Charles Blount, Elizabeth's lady-in-waiting begins to penetrate the queen's secret. The truth finally comes out — that Hélène and Sir Charles are very much in love—so the great queen yields and accords their marriage, though not without a feeling of regret that her own love has been spurned. The many disguises and misunderstandings, redeemed by no clear character-study or graceful dialog, ban the composition from the ranks of literature.

A one-act drama called *L'Anneau du Comte d'Essex* [39] by Ali Vial de Sabligny gives the story of an attempt to save Essex at his last hour. The actors are only four in number: Queen Elizabeth, Lord Giffurk, an old noble, Lady Wiffrid, a lady-in-waiting, and Lord Sommerson, Essex's deadly enemy. Lord Sommerson holds in his possession the ring which Essex has ordered him to convey to Queen Elizabeth, but Sommerson, thinking this an easy means of disposing of a troublesome rival, fails to deliver it; Lady Wiffrid therefore works to extract it from his clutches. By flattery and cajoling and by according him an interview at her house for the following day, she hands him her ring which shall serve as a *laissez-passer,* asking in return for the one he wears on his finger. Sommerson, reluctant to give the ring, decides to test whether she realizes its power and therefore refuses. Lady Wiffrid feigns she thinks his refusal arises from the fact that another mistress has presented it, and Sommerson, confident that she has no knowledge of its powers, gives her the ring. She hastens with her cherished treasure to the queen, who immediately sends Lord Giffurk to stop the execution, but at that moment the bell tolls in sign of Essex's death. Elizabeth condemns Sommerson by way of vengeance, but Lady Wiffrid, who feels responsible for Sommerson's denunciation, secures a commutation of his sentence to exile.

Where the author got his fanciful names, why he did not show some motivation for Lady Wiffrid's actions, or why he did not show the queen more feeling, remains a mystery. For a one-act play which above all should possess concentrated action, this production is singularly lacking in the requisite qualities.

We have no record of Marteau's or Ali Vial de Sabligny's

[39] Published in *Veillées du Poëte, Drames et Morceaux détachés,* Paris, Dentu, 1865.

compositions having been performed, but there did come another big nineteenth-century production of *Le Comte d'Essex* in Couturier's five-act drama, played for the first time at the Châtelet, May 4, 1868.[40] The action takes place at Essex House where the master's profusion and lavishness are the talk of the domestics.[41] Essex and Southampton, after remarking on Sir Walter Raleigh's sudden rise to favor and Elizabeth's susceptibility to his adulation, confer on plans for Essex's conspiracy, by which he means to make Elizabeth abdicate in favor of James VI of Scotland so that he may regain his former power at court.[42] Among another group of courtiers there is gossip of Essex's former love-affair with Sir Howard's wife. Howard, who has overheard the gossip, vows he will have vengeance on the man whom he has so long considered his good friend and has now discovered to be his betrayer, by revealing the plans of conspiracy to Essex's enemy, Raleigh. Further complications arise with the arrival of Queen Elizabeth who has been hunting in the neighborhood. Since the monarch apprehends Essex's love for young Catherine Sidney, she decides to engage Catherine to Raleigh. She is delighted to see Essex's apparent jealousy for Raleigh's hold on royal favor, and offers him a ring in token of reconciliation. But Essex, we now learn, is already secretly married to Catherine and continues his plans of conspiracy, telling his wife to feign consent to the engagement with Raleigh until he can get his plot under way. Catherine begs him to desist from his rash undertakings—she will flee with him. But Essex cannot so easily forget fame and power:

Il faut que je sente au-dessous de moi, tout ce qui s'agite, tout ce qui pense! (Act II, scene II)

Raleigh feels no less worried than Essex at the commanded

[40] Published by Dentu, Paris, 1868.

[41] History paints Essex thus: cf. D. N. B. "His generosity to his friends is the best trait in his character, although beside it must be set his habitual extravagance."

[42] The historical Essex feared Cecil's bringing the Spanish Infanta to the English throne as successor to Elizabeth, and therefore made negotiations with James VI of Scotland, though probably without any intention of forcing Elizabeth to abdicate.

engagement to Catherine since he has secretly married Elizabeth Throckmorton.[43]

Howard now reveals Essex's conspiracy to Raleigh, who in turn passes the news to the queen along with the announcement of Essex's union with Catherine. At the engagement ceremony Elizabeth ascertains in the pallor of Essex and Catherine Sidney the truth of Raleigh's report, so with fiendish delight suggests that the wedding ceremony of Catherine and Raleigh be celebrated that very evening. Essex thereupon announces his marriage and breaks out against the queen, who angrily orders his arrest. Provocation to a duel between Essex and Raleigh, and an announcement that the house is surrounded by enemies brings Act III to an exciting close.

The scene now shifts from Essex House to the court. Although Raleigh, who has desired only Essex's downfall, would now cease hostilities, Howard, who is bent on vengeance for the offence done him, will not rest until he has brought Essex to the scaffold:

Je comprends vos scrupules, sir Raleigh; votre rôle est terminé, le mien commence. (Act IV, scene III)

The group thus breaks into opposing factions, Raleigh, Lady Howard and Catherine Sidney working in vain to save Essex. In the trial when Francis Bacon rises with the other peers in the vote of condemnation because he hopes thereby to gain Elizabeth's favor, Essex bitterly calls him a Judas but makes no defense of himself and takes his sentence with the utmost calm. The queen, horribly disturbed at her favorite's conviction, dispatches Lady Howard to his prison to make him send back the ring.

The final act shows Essex's last hours in the Tower of London before his execution. Raleigh entreats him to escape by the Thames, but Essex refuses on the grounds of honor. Lady Howard who secures the ring is unfortunately confronted by her husband who has heard Elizabeth's command and followed his wife to the prison. Seizing the ring from her and holding it up so that Essex may see, he cries that he has vengeance for July 10, 1597. Essex murmurs, "Dieu est juste", and mounts the

[43] In 1592 Raleigh was committed to the Tower by the enraged queen for his intrigue with Elizabeth Throckmorton, but released a few months later.

scaffold. Catherine, meanwhile, who has taken poison and is at the point of death when the queen arrives, murmurs that Elizabeth has not kept her promise regarding the ring. The monarch demands an explanation from Howard, who tries to vindicate his action, whereat she expostulates:

Il t'avait pris ton honneur, dis-tu? il avait séduit ta femme! . . . La belle affaire! . . . il m'avait bien trompée, moi! . . . et je lui avais pardonné! (Act V, scene XI)

She accuses Howard of having killed Beauty, Youth, Intelligence, and Force, leaving her a lonely, forsaken woman.

The dramatist makes Elizabeth a rather entertaining though not particularly historical character. Essex at the opening of the play thus describes her:

Cette vierge de l'occident, comme elle se fait audacieusement appeler, songe à s'émanciper, elle veut plaire, être aimée pour elle-même . . . platoniquement, il est vrai, mais sans partage; elle exige de ses favoris une chasteté, une fidélité absolue, en échange de sa faveur! . . . n'est-ce pas de la démence. (Act I, scene VI)

Raleigh, commenting on the recent reconciliation of Elizabeth and Essex, gives a concise character portrayal of both:

Le comte est emporté et orgueilleux, la reine despote et violente, je doute que la bonne harmonie reste longtemps dans le ménage. (Act II, scene IX)

To herself, Elizabeth (represented in this drama as a woman of forty-five) confides dejectedly:

Tu l'aimes? mais regarde-toi donc, insensée! quelle folie est la tienne! le temps n'a-t-il pas ridé ton visage? Tes favoris te subissent mais ne sauraient t'aimer. Ce qu'ils aiment, c'est la beauté, c'est la jeunesse et tu es vieille et laide. (Act IV, scene XI)

The author, in his effort to create local color and atmosphere, makes many references to Shakespeare, and even introduces him as a character at the festival Essex has prepared, where he shall play his new tragedy, *Hamlet*. Elizabeth graciously receives him: [44]

[44] This picture of Elizabeth as a patron of letters cannot be considered authentic. Jessopp in his article on Elizabeth in the *D. N. B.* states: "For literature as we now understand the term, it is curious that she never appears to have had any taste. Some of Shakespeare's plays were

Mon règne est fécond en grands capitaines, en navigateurs, et en philosophes. La place est vacante pour un Eschyle ou un Euripide, si notre protection suffit pour le faire éclore, elle vous est acquise. (Act II, scene XII)

Later, during Essex's trial, he disguises himself as a "greffier" in order to attend the proceedings and follow the fate of his patron.

Sir Walter Raleigh is represented as the typical courtier who makes flattering speeches and performs gallant deeds; the episode of the cloak, of course, plays its part in making a *coup de théâtre*: the queen, in passing from the castle to a pavillion, must cross a puddle; Essex orders the hole filled with sand, but Raleigh gallantly lays down his mantle, makes an extravagant speech, and the curtain falls on Act I. Although a rival of Essex for his favor with the queen, Raleigh is moved by no vicious feelings and has no desire to see his opponent brought to the block. It is Lord Howard who directs all the sinister aspects of the tragedy.

Couturier's drama completes the list of Essex plays in French literature. In them all, the romantic character of the episode has been stressed: the story of the rival and the ring receives much attention, Essex's guilt is condoned, and Elizabeth's grief at his execution considered a forecast of her imminent death. Unfortunately, the cold historical facts do not substantiate the glowing romance; Elizabeth did not express regret for having sentenced Essex, she evidently did not feel that the rash young noble had received an unjust punishment, and according to historical accounts she was never gayer than in the year 1601.

But in 1602 her health began to fail; early in 1603 she caught a bad cold, became alarmingly ill, and passed away quietly March 24th of that year. To the last, Elizabeth refused to recognize an heir; the historian Innes [45] thus describes the various claimants to the throne:

In point of priority by heredity King James of Scotland unquestionably stood first of the descendants of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York; yet

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performed in her presence, but she looked upon such matters as pastime—one show was as good as another."

[45] Arthur D. Innes, *England under the Tudors*, vol. IV, of *A History of England* in 6 vols. General editor: C. W. C. Oman, London, Methuen, 1905, p. 399.

the fact that he was not only an alien but King of Scotland made him in himself an unwelcome candidate. Next to him, since like him she descended from Margaret Tudor, stood his cousin Arabella—a Stewart too, but of the Lennox Stewarts, not the Royal House: an English subject; but with the drawback that she was a woman and unmarried. Third, but first under the will of Henry VIII was Lord Beauchamp, son of Katharine Grey and the Earl of Hertford; about the validity of his parents' marriage, however, there was a doubt.

The dramatists, Nus and Brot, authors of *Jane Grey* already discussed, found in this situation material for a drama called *Le Testament de la Reine Elisabeth,* drame historique à grand spectacle en cinq actes et huit tableaux, played for the first time at the Gaîté, May 14, 1867.[46] The play is a lurid melodrama, showing the struggle of different factions for the inheritance. Even before Elizabeth's death, James VI comes to England, disguised as a cattle-herd, spying on his rivals and hoping to win the crown by his astute manoeuvres.[47] The authors bring in the Guy Fawkes Gunpowder Plot[48] and many other sensational events which do not concern us, but their picture of the sick and aged queen, who, surrounded by her enemies, tries to keep up appearances to the very last moment of her existence, offers an interesting subject of study: to the disguised James she speaks of himself:

On dit qu'il ne m'aime guère, votre roi, et qu'il convoite ouvertement mon héritage. (Ier Tableau, scene XI)

To Arabella Stuart's sympathetic advances she coldly replies:

Je n'ai pas de parents, je n'ai que des ennemis qui désirent ma mort et convoitent mes dépouilles. (*ibid.*)

In her death-scene, which according to stage directions is to be a representation of Paul Delaroche's painting, she murmurs:

Ah ces têtes coupées qui me regardent . . . Comte d'Essex, tu me trahissais . . . Marie Stuart, on t'aimait trop. (3e Tableau, scene II)

When told to name her successor, she calls Seymour[49] "un jeune

[46] Published in Paris, Librairie Dramatique, 1867.

[47] According to history, James did not leave Edinburgh until April 5th, two weeks after Elizabeth's death.

[48] This plot did not occur until 1605.

[49] Lord Beauchamp's son.

fou," Arabella "une âme sans énergie," and James "le fils de Marie Stuart, jamais!" Her minister obliges her to sign in favor of James Stuart, and her last words express her bitterness:

> Je vais mourir, abandonnée de tous, à la merci de mes ennemis . . . Ah! j'ai voulu vivre seule, j'ai haï tout le monde, je n'ai aimé que moi . . . je suis punie, je suis punie. (4e Tableau, scene IV)

The note of justice and retribution, found in all melodramas, prevails in this death-scene.

Fortunately, Elizabeth's passing possessed nothing of the theatrical; but she left, says Camden "a great miss of herself." Historians agree in pointing to the Age of Queen Elizabeth as a time when men lived life abundantly, when the present was full of hope, when the "joie de vivre" everywhere was manifest. "Then alas! Gloriana died," says Walter Besant,[50] "and the world of poetry sank back into prose."

[50] Walter Besant, *London in the Time of the Tudors*, London, Black, 1904.

CHAPTER VIII

The Fate of the Tudors

From the foregoing study of the plays themselves one can readily perceive how freely French dramatists have dealt with the Tudors and what liberties they have taken with the historical facts in order to create dramatic situations. In fact, Dumas's definition of his *Catherine Howard* as the extra-historical play in which history serves merely as the hook on which he hangs his picture applies to many of the dramas on the Tudor monarchs. From his account of the genesis of that play with the metamorphosis of *Edith aux longs cheveux* into *Catherine Howard* we can infer what happened in other cases. Hugo's *Marie Tudor,* all the French adaptations of Scott's *Kenilworth* (which itself belongs in Dumas's category), *vaudevilles* on Elizabeth's youth, or melodramas on the reign of Henry VIII all fall into the same extra-historical group.

Other plays, though based on an historical situation, receive an influx of romantic episodes or anecdotes to enliven the plot. Thus we find the story of Northumberland's climb to power frequently enhanced by the account of his poisoning young Edward VI; many playwrights show Elizabeth in love with Norfolk and jealous of his unfailing devotion to the Queen of Scots; the romance of Elizabeth and Essex is usually related with the fantastic additions of the rival and the ring; all dramatists introduce a rival, and only Thomas Corneille omits the ring story; the anecdote of the gallant Raleigh and his cloak likewise makes its way into the dramas.

The introduction of such extraneous incidents or the development of an unhistoric episode sometimes leads to actual distortion of the Dynasts' characters. Henry VII, to be sure, appears so little in French drama that he cannot suffer gravely in this respect, but Henry VIII has rarely received a complete portrait. Authors select one or two characteristic traits and dwell on them to the exclusion of other lineaments. For this reason Henry VIII has become a symbol for the Tyrant; not only in Chénier's tragedy where he stands manifestly as the typical despot, but in

a large group of plays regarding the Tudors we find allusions to his imperious manner. In *Les Trois Catherine* (Act I, scene X) he concedes that "la voix du peuple est celle de Dieu," then adds that one must respect it when it is in accord with his own plans. In the same drama (Act I, scene XIII) he bids the council act carefully:

Vous en serez responsable devant Dieu. . . . (avec expression) et devant moi! ! !

The same autocratic nature shows in Dupetit Méré's *Anne de Boulen*:

Habitué à voir tout plier sous le poids de son autorité, Henri est le plus impérieux des hommes. (Act I, scene IV)

Henry himself remarks in a later scene:

Ignorez-vous donc que rien ne peut résister à ma volonté, que les lois même se taisent quand je commande. (Act I, scene XI)

Not only Henry's despotic nature but his furious temper appear in many plays. In *Les Trois Catherine,* at the moment of his death, he angrily plots the destruction of Catherine Parr, Seymour, and all others whom he considers his enemies, then dies in a paroxysm of rage caused by his own fury. Henry's temper has become proverbial with French dramatists who in portraying the characters of his descendants paint them as "filles d'Henri VIII" to designate their vehemence. Thus Mary Tudor in her moments of fierceness and cruelty is called true daughter of Herny VIII and Elizabeth, whenever she evinces particular propensities for wrath and vengeance, receives the same epithet. In Ancelot's *Elisabeth d'Angleterre* (Act V, scene II) she cries to the absent Essex:

Je n'écouterai plus, ingrat, que ma colère,
Et je me souviendrai qu'Henri huit est mon père.

Imperious, violent, inconstant. The last adjective applies also to the character of Henry VIII painted in French drama. In Victor Hugo's *Marie Tudor* (Iere Journée, scene II) the turnkey of the Tower describes him to Gilbert:

Un homme singulier que ce roi Henri VIII! Un homme qui changeait de femmes comme une femme change de robes. Il répudia la première, il fit couper la tête à la seconde, il fit ouvrir le ventre à la troisième; quant à la quatrième, il lui fit grâce, il la chassa; mais en revanche il

fit couper la tête à la cinquième. Ce n'est pas le conte de Barbe-Bleue que je vous fais, c'est l'histoire d'Henri VIII.

Again in *Les Trois Catherine* (Act I, scene VI) Catherine Parr warns Catherine Howard of the king's inconstancy:

Ah! Madame . . . méfiez-vous des brusques retours de ce cœur inconstant . . . ses premières épouses se flattaient aussi de l'avoir fixé pour la vie.

Most authors content themselves with portraying one or another of these three characteristics of Henry VIII, though sometimes one encounters a different conception: the authors of *Lord Surrey* show him (quite unhistorically) at the complete mercy of the villain Clinton, who holds complete sway in the kingdom; Duport and Monnais picture him in one instance bowing to the superior power of his Italian music-master, Baltazarini, who remarks contentedly:

Je n'ai connu que deux hommes sincères, Michel-Ange et moi, et encore j'ai l'avantage . . . Michel-Ange se contentit de résister à Jules II, et moi je me fais obéir par Hénri VIII. Voilà ce que c'est que le pouvoir des arts . . . les arts d'abord et ensuite les couronnes. (*Les Trois Catherine*, Act I, scene V)

Plays like the violent *Toute Faute s'expie* of Jean Rouxel, in which Henry VIII appears as a licentious brute, show that in some cases Henry's character has been actually distorted. Only rarely do we find a more complete estimate of his character. Auguste Adam in his *Darnley* (1873) at least gives a more general portrait of the ruler:

Beaucoup de sang innocent a coulé sous son règne; mais il a châtié bien des traîtres; il a légué à sa fille un trône inébranlable, un peuple uni dans une même foi et dans un même amour, et il a eu pour lui le parlement d'Angleterre. (Act I, scene III)

But as a rule Henry VIII's portrait remains incomplete.

Edward VI, like his grandfather Henry VII, has not generally received the notice of dramatists. In only one play, the *Jane Grey* of Nus and Brot, does he figure, and here his rôle goes far beyond the bounds of history. His effeminate nature, his nervous disease, and his violent death at the hands of Arundel all form a fanciful picture not corroborated by historians.

Probably more than any other member of the dynasty, Mary

Tudor has suffered the unfair treatment of historians and consequently of dramatists. In the seventeenth century La Calprenède in his *Ieanne reyne d'Angleterre* showed her overclement. As a reaction, perhaps, against Catholic sympathy, Madame de Staël and Leblanc painted her cruel and vindictive while Victor Hugo accused her of leading the life of a shameless courtesan, and Soumet, followed by Nus and Brot, showed her infatuated with young Guilford and putting Jane Grey to death merely through jealous spite.

Only slightly less cruel than Mary appears her sister Elizabeth, whom most authors show guilty of shedding the innocent blood of her cousin Mary Stuart. With the exception of Tronchin's and Montchrestien's plays, French dramas on this subject make the Tudor queen too unfeeling in her treatment of Mary; and some of the *tendenzdramen* go so far as to make her a hypocritical monster who conceals her delight in bloodshed behind a mask of perfidious piety. The violent character of Elizabeth portrayed by so many French dramatists flashes forth in her apostrophe to the Queen of Scots in the *Marie Stuart* (Act V, scene I) of C. F. Martin:

> Du grand art de régner tu n'en es qu'aux essais.
> Va, descends chez les morts conter ce que tu sais.
> Instruis Anne Boleyn que sa fille éhontée
> N'a pas dégénéré du flanc qui l'a portée;
> Déplore-lui ton front de mon foudre encore chaud;
> Mais si tu vois mon père, apprends-lui que là-haut
> Les réformes déjà par lui-même entreprises
> S'accompliront par moi malgré Rome et les Guises.

In the same play her favorite Leicester speaks in no enthusiastic terms of his duties as courtier:

> Attentif à flatter une vieille jalouse
> Qui me leurra vingt ans du rang de mon épouse.
> (Act III, scene I)

We have seen that in all three episodes which dramatists have treated—the Kenilworth story, the Mary Stuart-Norfolk theme, and the Essex romance—Elizabeth manifests violent jealousy. While jealousy was a very present trait in the character of the historical Elizabeth, and while we know that she never forgave Leicester, Essex, or Robert Carey for marrying on the sly,

dramatists are too prone to represent that trait to the exclusion of others no less pronounced.

We have seen that the sovereigns themselves have undergone modification at the hands of French playwrights; the nobles also frequently drop their historical rôles to play more important or more complicated parts. The Duke of Norfolk assumes additional duties in becoming the lover of Elizabeth; Leicester, we know from history, was in the Netherlands at the time of Mary Stuart's execution, yet many eighteenth and nineteenth-century dramatists make him play an important part in her destruction. The story of the Kenilworth episode and Leicester's responsibility for his wife's demise we know to be pure fiction. In the case of Essex, dramatists have shown unusual lenience, reducing his guilt to a negligible quantity and showing him the unfortunate victim of a court intrigue. Names of nobles have not always been carefully respected, as we noted in the case of La Calprenède and Thomas Corneille who apply the wrong name to the wrong historical character. One encounters often fantastic spelling: thus, Jane Grey's Tilney is changed to Tilray, Abergavenny becomes Albergenny, and Tweed, Tweld. In Regnault's *Marie Stuart* "l'illustre de Celon" evidently stands for George Seton.

Why have French dramatists thus distorted the Tudors? Sometimes perhaps simply from carelessness or ignorance; sometimes also for deeper reasons. The picture of Henry VIII drawn by Marie-Joseph Chénier which represents the Tyrant, undeniably had its moral purpose, as the comments on divorce found in the *Lambert Simnel ou le Mannequin politique* of Picard and Empis or the *Jane Gray* of Alexandre Soumet and the remarks on government found in *Le Pâtissier Usurpateur* had a political purpose. For similar reasons the political writer Mirinny has given us his *Arafa* the meaning of which word he discloses in the sub-title: *L'Amour d'une Reine ou l'Abîme franco-anglais.*[1] Mirinny, deeply interested in foreign relations, explains in the preface of this drama his motives for giving such a work to the public:

Les Germains ont beaucoup de qualités, mais ils méprisent et asservissent progressivement toutes les autres races de l'Humanité. Il est donc

[1] Drame en 5 actes, en vers, par L. Mirinny, Paris, Imprimerie Typographique E. Eybord, imprimé aux frais de l'auteur.

indispensable que ces races s'entendent et s'unissent contre ce commun et formidable ennemi. *Arafa* a précisément pour but spécial de faire ressortir les dangers, à ce point de vue, des conflits avec l'Angleterre; il suffit ici de mentionner ce péril.

L. Mirinny, auteur de la Pantosynthèse
le 28 janvier 1900.

The play describes Elizabeth's affair with François, duc d'Anjou, making Leicester jealous of such an alliance and responsible for the failure of the venture. One need scarcely add that judged from the point of view of literary merit, the play sinks into the darkest obscurity.

Philosophical ideas, too, find reflection in the dramas on the Tudors. The theories of the eighteenth-century primitivists with their cry of "Back to Nature!" and their insistence on freedom from all the trammeling conventions of society probably influenced Comte Guibert's play on Anne Boleyn which is the only drama on the subject of Anne's downfall to show her guilty.[2] The Thomas More theme as well as that of the Queen of Scots has become a subject for religious propaganda.

It would be rather difficult to state in just what measure circumstances influenced the subjects treated by the dramatists of different centuries. It seems more or less significant, however, that no seventeenth-century author depicted the last hours of Anne Boleyn. The seventeenth century could not withstand the influence of the Catholic historians who had pictured Anne as a wicked woman undeserving of any pity. Not until the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, therefore, did dramatists treat the subject of her execution. The same Catholic influence perhaps led La Calprenède to depict Mary Tudor as a benignant sovereign in his *Ieanne reyne d'Angleterre,* while he made her younger sister Elizabeth harsh and unfeeling. In

[2] See Gilbert Chinard's "Quelques Origines littéraires de *René*", *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America,* vol. XLIII, no. 1, March, 1928, for a discussion of literary works on the subject of incest in the late eighteenth century. M. Servais Etienne, in *Le Genre Romanesque en France depuis la 'Nouvelle Héloise' jusqu'aux approches de la Révolution,* Paris, Colin, 1922, p. 308, gives a list of novels which have incest as their theme. Comte Guibert could have been familiar with many of these works, and if not the works themselves, the general tendencies of the period influenced his portrayal of Anne Boleyn and her brother George.

a later period, on the other hand, when anti-clerical feeling ran high, Madame de Staël and her successors made Mary cruel and vindictive. Victor Hugo pictures her as indifferent to the hardships of her subjects and unable to appreciate the noble qualities of the workman Gilbert. In the character of that hero the dramatist introduces some of his favorite beliefs on the subject of democracy and we hear an echo of the debates on social principles which resounded throughout the nineteenth century.

With the question of background and atmosphere the seventeenth century felt only slightly preoccupied. The local color found in the classical tragedies on the subject of the Tudors, as we have seen, remains at most the kind found in Racine's *Bajazet,* internal rather than external, found in the characterization rather than in the stage-settings, the costumes, or the allusions to historical events. But with the melodrama and romantic drama of the nineteenth century, local color of the external variety becomes much more pronounced. The love of pageantry and brilliant display seized the authors of this period, who mounted their dramas "avec tout l'éclat possible" as the modern cinema directors enchant the eyes of the masses today with gorgeous spectacles. Beyond the costumes and settings, however, nineteenth-century dramatists often felt the need of introducing a more essential atmosphere, which they obtained by creating a rich background of secondary characters of historical name. Victor Hugo in his *Marie Tudor,* Ancelot in his *Elisabeth d'Angleterre,* Fontan in his *Perkins Warbec* made quite successful achievements in this way.

A character whom all the nineteenth-century French dramatists knew and consequently used for background in their plays on the Tudor period was William Shakespeare. Sometimes his works alone are mentioned: Ancelot's Countess of Nottingham reads *Othello* and Soumet's Jane Grey refers to *Macbeth;* sometimes the poet's own lines are used: Vernet's Amy Robsart takes Ophelia's words in her madscene. In his *Amy Robsart* Victor Hugo represents Shakespeare as the author of a masquerade performed at Kenilworth Castle during the entertainment offered by Leicester in 1575. At this date the English playwright was only eleven years old. In the same play Hugo represents Elizabeth quoting (in French translation, of course), the famous lines from *Macbeth* (Act I, scene VII):

I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself,
And falls on the other.

Couturier in his *Comte d'Essex* showed the dramatist's *Hamlet* produced at Essex House with Queen Elizabeth acting as a patroness of the arts. In *Le Songe d'une nuit d'été* (1850) by Leuven and Rosier we saw Elizabeth encouraging Shakespeare in his literary pursuits. We have already shown that Elizabeth did not patronize literature and that Essex protected the poet Spenser rather than Shakespeare. We must conclude, therefore, that the French playwrights have veritably forced him into their dramas, committing anachronisms and exaggerations in order to introduce him.

Another character brought into plays on the Tudors, into melodramas especially, is the magician-physician Cornelius Agrippa, known in history as Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim (1486-1535) who received a pension from François Ier, became physician to his mother, Louise de Savoie, and later was appointed historiographer to Charles Quint. Nus and Brot introduce him into their *Jane Grey* as the physician who by administering a potion miraculously cures Edward VI of his neurasthenia. Fillion and Jousserandot in their *Lord Surrey* make him a very human kind of person explaining to Surrey that he is a sorcerer only to wicked men like the villainous Clinton whom he would frighten by his prophecies. We have an opportunity in a subsequent scene to observe his method of foretelling the future: having paid careful attention to Clinton's account of the past dissension between Surrey and himself the "wizard" needs no occult powers to predict what will happen.

Quite naturally one finds in these French plays on the Tudors an expression of the characters' feelings for France. The Anne Boleyn of Chénier's *Henry VIII* cries before her death:

Oh, qui me les rendra, ces jours de mon enfance!
Roi, peuple fortuné, doux climat de la France.
Pour ce sanglant rivage, où j'ai reçu le jour,
Devais-je abandonner ton aimable séjour! (Act IV, scene I)

Madame de Staël's Jane Grey and Guilford, as also Soumet's young couple, hope to escape persecution by flight to France. Montchrestien showed Mary Queen of Scots endeavoring to

escape from Scotland to reach the shores of France; only because of a storm has she come to the shores of "les barbares Anglois"; many plays tell of her dying wish to be buried on French soil.

In the detailed study of the plays we have dwelt on the rôle of painting in its relation to French dramas on the Tudors; we have seen, also, the rôle of foreign literatures in these dramas. It remains now to make some estimate on the literary value of the productions. A reading of the plays cannot fail to convince one of their general mediocrity. Most of the authors are men whose names have quite justifiably sunk into oblivion. Who today remembers Regnault, Drap-Arnaud, La Place, Nus, Vernet, Couturier, or Carénou? And even when we meet names well-known in literature like those of Madame de Staël, Scribe, Victor Hugo, or Dumas père, we find that their works on the Tudors are not those which have made their names famous. Posterity has remembered Madame de Staël for other compositions than her *Jane Gray;* Scribe's talent is seen to better advantage in his *Bataille de Dames* or his *Verre d'Eau* than in his *Leicester, ou le Château de Kenilworth;* Victor Hugo's reputation as a dramatist, if he can claim any at all, derives from his *Hernani, Ruy Blas,* and *Marion de Lorme* rather than from his *Amy Robsart* or *Marie Tudor,* and Dumas père's *Henry III et sa Cour* and *Charles VII, chez ses grands Vassaux* more clearly display his talent in the historical drama than a play like *Catherine Howard.* It is with the Essex theme that French dramatists have had greater success. La Calprenède's *Comte d'Essex* stands out as his best dramatic work, and Thomas Corneille's tragedy of the same title remains, along with his *Ariane,* his best composition; the fact that it was famous for at least a century testifies its popularity.

At the outset of this study we set the problem of discovering to what extent French dramatists have evoked the Tudor period and given a picture of sixteenth-century England. Now, after reviewing the plays, we can conclude that French authors, interested as they were in the Tudors, have often used the dynasts as symbols of Tyranny, Cruelty, and Jealousy, and that they give only partial portraits of the monarchs themselves, without painting any very complete picture of England under their dominion.

APPENDIX

LIST OF PLAYS ON THE TUDORS

HENRY VII

Richard III, tragédie en 5 actes et en vers par Mme Lem . . . (Lemaignien), Paris, A. Egron; Barba, 1818.

Lambert Simnel ou le Mannequin politique, comédie en cinq actes et en prose par MM. Picard et Empis, représentée pour la première fois au Théâtre Français le 24 mars 1827.

Perkins Warbec ou le Commis marchand, vaudeville historique en deux actes par MM. Théaulon, Brazier et Carmouche représenté pour la première fois à Paris sur le Théâtre de Madame le 15 mai 1827.

Perkins Warbec, drame historique en 5 actes et en vers par L. M. Fontan représenté sur le Théâtre Royal de l'Odéon par les comédiens ordinaires du roi le 6 mai 1828. Paris, J. N. Barba, 1828.

Le Pâtissier Usurpateur, pièce historique en cinq petits actes par MM. Simonnin, Benjamin et Théodore N. (Nézel) représentée pour la première fois à Paris, sur le Théâtre de la Gaîté, le 4 décembre 1830. Paris chez P. J. Hardy, 1831.

Marguerite d'Yorck, mélodrame historique en 3 actes, précédé d'un Prologue, représenté pour la première fois sur le Théâtre de la Gaîté, le 23 mai 1839, par MM. Narcisse Fournier & Olivier Dessarsin; publié dans le *Magasin Théâtral*, Paris, Marchant, editeur.

HENRY VIII

Thomas Morus ou le Triomphe de la Foy & de la Constance tragédie en prose. Dediée à Madame la Duchesse d'Esguillon, par Monsieur de la Serre. A Paris chez Augustin Courbé, 1642.

Henry VIII, tragédie en 5 actes par Marie-Joseph Chénier, député à la Convention Nationale; représentée pour la première fois à Paris, sur le Théâtre de la République, le 27 avril 1791. Paris, Moutard, 1793.

Anne de Boulen, mélodrame en 3 actes, par MM. Frédéric et * * *, musique de Adrian, ballet de M. Maximien. Représenté pour la première fois à Paris sur le Théâtre de l'Ambigu-Comique le mardi 8 mai 1821. Paris, chez Quoy, 1821.

Anne de Bouleyn, tragédie de Guibert (comte de) membre de l'Académie Française. Œuvres dramatiques publiées par sa veuve, Paris, Persan & Cie., 1822.

Thomas Morus ou le Divorce d'Henri VIII, tragédie en 5 actes représentée pour la première fois, sur le Théâtre Royal de l'Odéon le 9 décembre 1826, par M. X. V. Drap-Arnaud, Paris, Martinet, 1827.

Les Trois Catherine, scènes historiques du règne de Henri VIII en trois époques; paroles de MM. Duport et Ed. Monnais, musique de MM. Adolphe Adam et Casimir Gide; représentées, pour la première fois, sur le Théâtre des Nouveautés le 18 novembre 1830. Paris, J. N. Barba, 1830.

Catherine Howard, drame en 5 actes et 8 tableaux, par Alexandre Dumas, représenté pour la première fois au Théâtre de la Porte-Saint-Martin, le 2 juin 1834.

Anne de Boulen, opéra en 3 actes, paroles de Castil-Blaze d'après le drame italien de Romani, musique de Donizetti. Paris, Aulagnier, 1835.

Lord Surrey, drame en 5 actes par MM. Eugène Fillion et L. Jousserandot, représenté pour la première fois à Paris, sur le Théâtre de la Gaîté, le 17 mai, 1838. Théâtre Moderne.

Deux Reines, comédie-drame en 3 actes et 7 tableaux par Eugénie Casanova, Paris, 1867.

Toute Faute s'expie, drame en 5 actes et en six tableaux, en vers, par Jean Rouxel, Paris, Vanier, 1908.

Marguerite Morus, drame en 3 actes avec musique par Jacques d'Ars, Paris, 1912.

Thomas Morus, drame historique en 3 actes par Jacques d'Ars, Paris, s. d.

MARY TUDOR

Jeanne reyne d'Angleterre, tragédie de M. de La Calprenède. A Paris, chez Antoine de Sommaville, 1638.

Jeanne Gray, tragédie par M. de La Place, lue et reçue à la Comédie Française, le 1 mars 1777. Paris, chez Barrois l'aîné, 1781.

Jane Gray, tragédie en 5 actes et en vers par Mme de Staël, composée en 1787 et imprimée en 1790.

Marie Tudor, drame en 3 journées de Victor Hugo, représenté pour la première fois sur le Théâtre de la Porte-Saint-Martin, le 6 novembre 1833.

Jane Gray, drame en trois actes et cinq tableaux de M. Leblanc, mise en scène de M. Dupuis, décors de M. Rascalon, musique de M. François Bellon; précédé du *6 juillet 1553*, prologue en un acte; représenté pour la première fois à Paris sur le Théâtre dirigé par M. Dorsay (ci-devant Saqui). Paris, Gallet, 1834.

Jane Grey, tragédie en 5 actes et en vers par M. Alexandre Soumet et Madame Gabrielle Daltenheym représentée pour la première fois à Paris, sur le second Théâtre Français (l'Odéon) le 30 mars 1844. Magasin Théâtral, vol. 37, Paris, Marchant, 1844.

Jane Gray, drame historique en 5 actes et 8 tableaux par Aristide Carénou, Montauban, 1850.

Jane Grey, drame historique en 5 actes par MM. Eugène Nus et Alphonse Brot, représenté pour la première fois à Paris sur le Théâtre de l'Ambigu-Comique, le 6 novembre, 1856, musique nouvelle de M. Amédée Artus.

La Vivante Image, drame en 4 actes et 5 tableaux d'après l'anglais *The Tangled Skein* (E. Orczy) par Jean-Joseph Renaud représenté pour la première fois au Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt, le 27 octobre, 1913.

ELIZABETH

L'Escossoise Tragédie d'Anthoine de Montchrestien. A Rouen chez Jean Petit, 1601; à Rouen chez Jean Osmont, 1604; à Nyort, chez Jacques Vaultier, 1606; à Rouen, chez Pierre de la Motte, 1627.

Marie Stuart, reyne d'Ecosse, tragédie de M. Regnault. A Paris chez Toussaint Quinet, 1639.

Le Comte d'Essex, tragédie de M. de La Calprenède. A Paris, 1639.

Le Comte d'Essex, tragédie de Thomas Corneille. A Paris, 1678.

Le Comte d'Essex, tragédie par M. Boyer de l'Académie Française. A Paris, chez Charles Osmont, 1678.

Marie Stuart, reine d'Ecosse, tragédie qui sera représentée au College d'Harcourt pour la distribution des prix. A Paris chez Jean de Laulne, 1689.

Marie Stuart, tragédie en 3 actes en vers avec des intermèdes en musique. (anonyme) 1690.

Marie Stuard, reine d'Ecosse, tragédie par Monsieur Boursault, à Paris chez Jean Guignard, 1691 (Played in 1683).

Marie Stuart, reine d'Ecosse (tragédie par F. Tronchin de Genève), Paris, Prault, 1735.

Marie Stuart, tragédie de P. A. Lebrun, représentée pour la première fois sur le Théâtre Français le 6 mars, 1820.

Marie Stuard, Reine d'Ecosse par Doigny du Ponceau. A Paris, chez Boucher, 1820.

Marie Stuart, tragédie en 5 actes par J. V., Paris, 1820.

Marie Stuart, drame en 3 actes et en prose, imité de la tragédie allemande de Schiller par MM. Merle et Rougemont; représenté pour la première fois à Paris sur le Théâtre de la Porte-Saint-Martin le 8 août 1820. Paris, Barba, 1820.

Le Château de Kenilworth, mélodrame en 3 actes à grand spectacle, tiré du roman de sir Walter Scott par MM. Boirie et H. Lemaire. Musique de M. Alexandre. Ballet de M. Blache. Décors de M. Cicéri. Représenté pour la première fois à Paris sur le Théâtre de la Porte-Saint-Martin, le 23 mars 1822. Paris, chez Palet, 1822.

Leicester, ou le Château de Kenilworth, opéra comique en 3 actes par Scribe et Mélesville, représenté pour la première fois le 25 janvier 1823.

Amy Robsart drame de Victor Hugo, représenté (sous le nom de Paul Foucher) sur le Théâtre Royal de l'Odéon, le 13 février, 1828.

La Jeunesse de Marie Stuart, drame en 2 parties mêlé de chant par MM. F. de Villeneuve et E. Vander-Burch, représenté pour la première fois sur le Théâtre de Madame, le 27 juin, 1829. Paris, Riga, 1829.

Marie Stuart, tragédie en un acte (4 soirée de Neuchatel 5 novembre, 1829) par Eugène de Pradel.

Elisabeth d'Angleterre, tragédie en 5 actes par M. Ancelot représentée pour la première fois sur le Théâtre Français le 4 décembre 1829. Paris, Bréauté, 1829.

Le Retour de Marie Stuart en Ecosse, drame en 5 actes. Histoires dramatiques par la Baronne d'Ordre. Paris, Dentu, 1839.

Dinah l'Egyptienne drame en 3 actes mêlés de chants par MM. Saint Yves et Louis Lefebvre, représenté pour la première fois à Paris sur le Théâtre de la Porte-Saint-Antoine le 18 avril 1840.

La Comtesse de Leicester, drame en 4 actes par M. Alphonse Vernet, représenté pour la première fois à Paris sur le Théâtre du Luxembourg le 7 octobre 1840.

Marie Stuart, tragédie en 5 actes et en vers par C. F. Martin, Paris, 1841.

Robert d'Evreux, Comte d'Essex, grand opéra en 3 actes, musique de Donizetti, paroles imitées de l'italien et arrangées pour la scène française par Etienne Monnier, représenté pour la première fois, au Théâtre des Arts de Rouen en février 1841. Paris, 1841.

Marie Stuart, opéra en 5 actes, paroles de Théodore Anne, musique de Niedermeyer, exécuté pour la première fois à Paris, sur le Théâtre de l'Académie royale de musique le 6 décembre 1844. Paris, 1845.

Le Songe d'une nuit d'été, opéra-comique en 3 actes par MM. Rosier et de Leuven, musique de M. Ambroise Thomas, représenté pour la première fois, à Paris, sur le Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique, le 20 avril 1850.

Marie Stuart, drame historique en 3 actes composé pour la Distribution de Prix et les récréations littéraires dans les Pensionnats de demoiselles par J. A. Guyet, Paris, 1851.

Henri et Marie Stuart, tragédie en 5 actes par M. Charles Rey (de l'Académie du Gard) Nîmes, 1852.

La Comtesse de Leicester, drame en 5 actes et en vers par P. Bergeron, docteur en philosophie et en lettres, ancien préfet des études, Professeur émérite de l'Université de Bruxelles, chevalier de l'ordre Ernest de Saxe-Cobourg-Gotha. Imprimerie Vanbuggenhaudt, Bruxelles, 1853.

Marie Stuard, essai tragique en 5 actes et en vers par Fs. D * (Dizac), Brive, 1856.

Marie Stuart, tragédie en 5 actes, Alger, 1862. Aux jeunes personnes du Pensionnat de Constantine dirigé par les religieuses de la doctrine chrétienne.

Marie Stuart, drame en 4 actes mêlés de chants à l'usage des pensionnats de demoiselles par l'abbé * * *. Paris, 1864.

L'Anneau du Comte d'Essex, drame en un acte en vers. (Veillées du Poète, Drames et Morceaux détachés) par Ali Vial de Sabligny, membre de l'union des poètes et de la société des travaux littéraires et artistiques. Paris, E. Dentu, 1865.

Le Testament de la Reine Elisabeth, drame historique à grand spectacle en 5 actes et 8 tableaux de MM. Eugène Nus et Alphonse Brot,

représenté pour la première fois sur le Théâtre de la Gaîté le 14 mai 1867. Paris, Librairie Dramatique, 1867.

Le Comte d'Essex, drame historique en 5 actes par F. Couturier, représenté pour la première fois, sur le Théâtre impérial du Châtelet, le 4 mai 1868. Paris, E. Dentu, 1868.

Campian, tragédie en 4 actes précédés d'un prologue, par le R. P. G. Longhaye de la Compagnie de Jésus, Paris, 1891.

Marie Stuart, drame historique en 3 tableaux par l'abbé Elie Barin, Magne, 1896.

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